



Athabasca University Students' Union

Council Meeting Minutes

APPROVED Dec 13, 2016

Tuesday, November 8, 2016

5:30pm MDT

Meeting Called By: Shawna Wasylyshyn, President

Type of Meeting: AUSU Council Meeting

Minutes: Donette Kingyens, Communications and Member Services Coordinator

Participants

Council: President Shawna Wasylyshyn, Vice President External and Student Affairs Julian Teterenko, Vice President Finance and Administration Kim Newsome, Councillor Robin Bleich (late), Councillor Andrew Gray, Councillor Scott Jacobsen, Councillor Amanda Lipinski, Councillor Brandon Simmons, Councillor Dixie Toliver

Staff: Executive Director Sarah Cornett, Communications and Member Services Coordinator Donette Kingyens, The Voice Managing Editor Karl Low

Members: Bonita Arbeau

Absent:

Meeting called to order at 5:34pm MT.

Agenda and Minutes

1.0 Adoption of Agenda All

Motion: BIRT AUSU Council adopt the agenda.

S. Jacobsen / J. Teterenko

Carried 8/0

2016-11-08 Council Agenda.pdf

It was noted that agenda item 4 was revised. The original agenda item was to accept the report from the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee, which was taken off to give council more time to review it. The agenda item was replaced with a motion regarding Canadian Western Trust Company Authorization.

2.0 Approval of Council Meeting Minutes All

Motion: BIRT AUSU Council approve the minutes of the October 13, 2016 regular council meeting.

S. Jacobsen / J. Teterenko

Carried 8/0

2016-10-13 Council Minutes DRAFT.docx

It was agreed to add a deadline for the new councillors to complete the governance training course of December 31, as the course is only 1 hour long.

Old Business

3.0 Review of Action Items All

Note: The status of the action and agenda items at the bottom of the most recent regular council minutes (October 13, 2016 in this case) were be reviewed briefly.

4.0 Canadian Western Trust Company Authorization

S. Cornett

Motion: BIRT:

1. the Student's Association of Athabasca University (the Company) open and operate one or more accounts with Canadian Western Trust Company (the "Custodian"). All transactions for the Company's account(s) shall be affected and controlled with respect to all matters pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Custodian's agreements with the Company governing such account(s) which agreement(s) are hereby ratified and confirmed.
2. the Authorized Signatories, specified in Schedule B to the Agreement, are hereby authorized and directed for and in the name of the Company to execute and deliver all such documents and do all such other acts such as provide on-going instructions as may be necessary or desirable to give effect to this resolution and/or may reasonably be required by the Custodian from time to time in connection with the opening and the continued operation and closing of the account(s).
3. any and all transactions for the Company's account(s) and any documents in connection therewith heretofore or hereafter by an Investment Manager on behalf of the Company are hereby ratified and confirmed.
4. All acts and things done and instruments of payment, agreements or other documents signed or purporting to be signed on behalf of the Company in the manner set forth in this resolution shall be valid and binding on the Company.
5. this resolution shall remain in full force and effect and be binding upon the Company until the Custodian has received written notification, in form and substance satisfactory to them, that this resolution has been repealed or replaced.

K. Newsome / A. Gray

Carried 8/0*CWT - Sch B - Certificate of Authorized Parties - AUSU.pdf**CWT - Sch A - Board Resolution – AUSU.pdf*

Note: These documents were circulated to the council by email prior to the meeting.

Although Adroit is AUSU's investment advisor, the portfolio with Canadian Western Trust. One of the documents referred to is about authorized signatories. Transactions (withdrawals or a change in direction) must be approved by 2 or more signatories. The signatories on the referenced Schedule B are President Shawna Wasylyshyn, VPFA Kim Newsome, and Executive Director Sarah Cornett. The other document outlines AUSU's investment policy guidelines, which has not changed.

This motion was requested by the investment advisor, as the company had a change of hands. However, all our investments, our advisor, and our fees all remain the same.

5.0 Revised Goals List

Executive

Motion: BIRT AUSU council adopt the 2016-2017 goals list as amended.

D. Toliver / B. Simmons

Carried 8/1 (K. Newsome)*Draft 2016-2017 AUSU Goals - reduced.docx*

The 2016-2017 goals that were originally approved by council involve an extensive amount of work and cannot be completed by staff and executive alone. On October 13, an email was sent to all councillors asking them to identify which goals they would like to work on. However, only one councillor responded. Consequently, council was then asked to identify

which goals they would like to trim off the goals list. No councillors indicated which goals they would like removed, so executive put together a proposal for a shortened goals list.

A question was raised about why item 1 under advocacy was being removed about observing provincial advocacy groups such as ASEC and CAUS. The following points were made about this:

- AUSU would have to request to be an observer with these organizations, and some organizations may require a fee to attend and time to set these meetings up.
- It would take extensive time attending meetings and possibly some conferences to monitor these organizations effectively. This could amount to a full time job on some weeks, and is simply not feasible for the VP External and Student Affairs to take on.
- AUSU was a member of these organizations in the past and decided to cease membership with them.
- Executive felt the VPEX's time was better spend focussing on involvement in CASA, which we are already a member of.

It was noted that new councillors may not know enough about how to make the goals work in order to take action on them.

R. Bleich joined the meeting at 5:54pm MT.

6.0 Policy Revisions

Executive

Motion: BIRT AUSU adopt the updated copies of

Policy 2.03 Council Governance: Officer's Job Descriptions;
Policy 2.08 Council Governance: Meeting Attendance;
Policy 2.11 Council Governance: Committee Governance;
Policy 8.01 Terms of Reference: Finance Committee;
Policy 8.02 Terms of Reference: Awards Committee; and
Policy 8.04 Terms of Reference: Member Engagement and Communications Committee

in which minor edits were made as part of an executive workload management plan to address identified issues with the requirement of having the president be required to attend every committee meeting.

J. Teterenko / B. Simmons

Policy_2.03_Council_Governance_Officers_Job_Descriptions_Exec_Edits.docx
Policy_2.08_Council_Governance_Meeting_Attendance_Exec_Edits
Policy_2.11_Council_Governance_Committee_Governance_Exec_Edits_v2.docx
Policy_8.01_TOR_Finance_Committee_Exec_Edits.docx
Policy_8.02_TOR_Awards_Committee_Exec_Edits.docx
Policy_8.04_TOR_MECC_Exec_Edits.docx

The following points were made:

- The policy changes remove the requirement for the President to be a voting member on every committee automatically.
- The chair of each committee should take responsibility for the committees.
- The president should be able to choose what committees to be on and not be forced to be on every one.
- The president has a very busy portfolio and regularly works more hours than she is compensated for, and does not have time for all committees.
- The president should not be required to vote on every motion passed by AUSU.
- Ex-officio, non-voting means that person is on the email list to stay aware of what is going on, but they do not have to attend meetings or vote.

- It was agreed that the President should not even be required to be an ex-officio, non-voting member of all of the committees.
- The policies were amended accordingly and circulated prior to voting. Policy 2.08 no longer need to be updated as a result of this update.

S. Wasylyshyn noted she would give up her vote on the Finance and MECC committee but would like to remain on the Awards committee.

Motion: BIRT AUSU remove Policy 2.08 from the previous motion.

K. Newsome / R. Bleich

Carried 9/0

Revised Motion: BIRT AUSU adopt the updated copies of

Policy 2.03 Council Governance: Officer's Job Descriptions;
Policy 2.11 Council Governance: Committee Governance;
Policy 8.01 Terms of Reference: Finance Committee;
Policy 8.02 Terms of Reference: Awards Committee; and
Policy 8.04 Terms of Reference: Member Engagement and Communications Committee

in which minor edits were made as part of an executive workload management plan to address identified issues with the requirement of having the president be required to attend every committee meeting.

J. Teterenko / B. Simmons

Carried 9/0

Note: Policy 2.12 Council Governance: Harassment was also approved by Executive as part of an informal review.

Reports

7.0 Reports for the Months of October 2016.

6.1 President's Report

S. Wasylyshyn

2016-10 President Report.pdf

S. Wasylyshyn noted that AU had never reported the situation with the Faculty of Health Disciplines on public record, so she insisted they add the item to the agenda at a General Faculties Council meeting. She made a presentation and got positive feedback from some of the members who agreed that these changes should not have been made and questioned how the retroactive changes were ever passed.

6.2 Vice President External and Student Affairs' Report

J. Teterenko

2016-10 VP External Report.pdf

AUSU just posted information about the Alberta Government Tuition review and will be posting more information shortly. It is important to get feedback on the Government's survey from AU students as they have a unique perspective.

6.3 Vice President Finance and Administration's Report

K. Newsome

2016-10 VP Finance Report.pdf

Student email implementation at AU is moving forward, although there is no specific timeline yet.

There is a possibility of using degree works to see how your courses fit into programs other than the one you are in but this is still being looked into.

There was a very productive meeting with the Registrar which includes a possibility of collaboration on the AU mobile app, as well as a discussion about the rising trends in plagiarism and cheating.

6.4 Executive Meeting Report

S. Wasylyshyn

2016-10 Executive Meeting Report.pdf

Note: Executive meeting reports are not public documents. Any decisions made by the Executive appear in a separate public report for ratification by Council. The Executive meeting report is circulated to Council for review and acceptance in their role as the governing council of AUSU.

6.5 Finance Committee Report

K. Newsome

2016-10 Finance Committee Report.pdf

The new committee member was brought up to speed on the Finance Committee and the reports.

6.6 Awards Committee Report

S. Jacobsen

2016-10 Awards Committee Report.pdf

There new committee members were provided with some training. It was also noted that the awards package from the November awards cycle will be provided to the committee on November 9.

6.7 Member Engagement and Communication Committee Report

J. Teterenko

2016-10 MEC Committee Report.pdf

The committee decided on some new AUSU swag and is working on the Social Media Communications Strategy and #igo2AU contest.

6.8 Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee Report

S. Cornett

2016-10 Joint C-V Committee Report.pdf

2016-10-26 Joint Council Voice Minutes DRAFT.pdf

2016-10-18 Joint Council Voice Minutes DRAFT.pdf

2016-09-14 Joint Council Voice Minutes.pdf

2016-08-23 Joint Council Voice Minutes.pdf

The executive plans to have a dedicated meeting to discuss the report following some updates to fill in a few gaps. Council is invited to ask question to be brought back to the committee.

A doodle poll will be sent to council shortly to set a date for the dedicated meeting to go over the report.

6.9 Executive Director's Report

S. Cornett

2016-10 Executive Director Report.pdf

6.10 Communication and Members Services Coordinator's Reports

D. Kingyens

2016-10 Communications Coordinator Report.pdf

Newsletter Stats.xlsx

It was also noted that AUSU has a tremendous increase in engagement on Facebook over the past year. In October 2015, with 63 posts that month, we had only 12,881 impressions. In October 2016, with 53 posts, we had 63,968 impressions.

It was noted that council has asked for information on the Voice Statistics. Staff now has access to Google Analytics for The Voice Magazine so can prepare statistics for the council to view.

Action Item – S. Cornett

6.11 Approval of Reports

All

Motion: BIRT Council approve the October 2016 reports as presented.

A. Gray / S. Jacobsen

Carried 9/0

Question & Answer Period

8.0 Question & Answer Period

S. Wasylyshyn

Observers were encouraged to participate in the Question & Answer period.

Observers are also invited to contact the AUSU office with any questions that arose from the meeting at ausu@ausu.org, 780.497.7000, or 1.855.497.7003.

It was noted that all three executives are going to Ottawa next week for CASA's advocacy week, where they will be going to Parliament Hill to meet various MP's to advocate on behalf of students. They will also be hosting a Meet & Greet in Ottawa on October 13, which has received 2 RSVP's so far.

So far there have been several informal meetings with AU administration regarding the program changes in the Faculty of Health Disciplines, including the President. Although we have nothing in writing yet, we have a verbal commitment that they are working on a letter to go out to the students in the FHD to ask all students impacted to contact either the Ombuds office or an independent advisor to come up with a program plan. However, nothing has been done as of yet.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next meetings of Council will be:

Tuesday, December 13, 2016, 5:30 pm MDT - Public Meeting

Tuesday, January 10, 2016, 5:30 pm MDT - Public Meeting (Tentative)

Motion to Adjourn at 7:10pm MT.

Summary of Action Items

Date	Status	Action Item and Responsible Party
October 13		Welcome and Oath of Office: New councillors to complete governance training by December 31. R. Bleich/A. Lipinski
October 13	Complete	Communications and Member Services Coordinator Report: Make a forum page on the AUSU website to list what forums AU currently has (if any) and provides information on other ways to connect with students. D. Kingyens
November 8		Communication and Member Services Coordinator Report: Provide The Voice google analytics statistics to council. S. Cornett

Summary of Agenda Items

Date	Status	Agenda Item and Committee

AUSU Executive Report

Shawna Wasylyshyn, President

Prepared: October 31, 2016



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Current Issues

Committees:

AU Board of Governors – The Board conducted an evening orientation for members on October 19 and I was able to attend in person. This was essential information and very important to attend. I was pleased that most of the newly appointed members were in attendance and we received a wealth of information. I did receive a more informal 1 on 1 training session with the University Secretariat when I was first appointed but this was much more in depth. The Board had a full meeting on October 20 and it was very productive. There was limited discussion about the FHD situation but it was held in camera, we were able to remain in the room this time because it was a very surface level conversation. There was a motion brought to the Board to recommend that AU move to a Provostial model; after going in camera the Board tabled the motion pending further consultation.

Sub Committees:

BOG Institutional Advancement – No meetings this month.

BOG Academic Affairs – No meetings this month.

BOG Honorary Awards – No meetings this month.

General Faculties Council – I attended GFC in person on October 12. Due to a glitch at AU, I didn't receive the meeting package until the day before, and upon reviewing the package I was alarmed because once AGAIN no one from the Administration had written about the FHD situation in any of their reports. I made a decision to add an item for discussion to the agenda at the GFC meeting. Originally, I was told by the University Secretariat that I was "too late" to add to the agenda, but when I quoted Robert's Rules – she changed her answer. When the item came up at the meeting and I had the floor, I said this:

On March 15 of this year, APPS approved a number of retroactive program changes to the LPN-BN program. The impact on students of these changes were vast and I'm going to name a few:

- *Overall, there is a large amount of confusion relating to the program changes, who they apply to and what the actual impact is. AU's communication plan was severely lacking and remains so today.*
- *Students were advised that if they were at a certain point in their program before Aug 10, 2016 they would be exempt from having to take some of the extra courses. They weren't informed of this until April which gave them almost zero*

time to get where they needed to be in the program. The information was communicated in Mid-April, so students missed the registration deadline to start courses May 1. The best they could do was start a course June 1 and try to have all of their grades in the system before August 10. This means a total of 71 days to complete multiple courses.

- *In an effort to meet the Aug 10, 2016 deadline, some students took extended absences from work, borrowed money and made other sacrifices to try to complete the courses before Aug 10.*
- *Students reported feeling abandoned, misled and manipulated by AU.*
- *Several students discussed leaving AU altogether and stated they would never recommend the program to anyone.*
- *Students who didn't make the Aug 10 deadline discussed the impact of paying for and taking three extra courses. This would come at a cost of approx.. \$2100 for an Alberta student, higher for students elsewhere. This doesn't include the cost of time for taking the extra courses as well.*
- *There is widespread fear among students that more changes are coming. Many wonder if they should remain in the program at all for fear of more changes on the way.*

GFC is the governing body responsible for academic matters at AU. This is an academic matter of great concern to students. I was disappointed once again, when reviewing the GFC meeting package to see no mention in any written report of the current situation for students in the Faculty of Health Disciplines. Some of what we are most concerned about is the precedent this sets and by having no formal record of the situation, its effects and the fact that it remains unresolved; students continue to be at risk. I want to ensure that the issue of retrospective changes, how they affect students and how they should or shouldn't be handled is a matter of permanent public record. The worst possible outcome for AU and all students, would be that we fail to document where we went wrong and lessons learned.

My statement did inspire a short discussion. One member of GFC openly apologized to students about how this was handled. AU's President and VPA both openly committed to reviewing and changing policy and procedure where needed to ensure that retroactive changes are better managed in the future. I responded that I was disappointed that none of the administration reports reflect this situation and how unfortunately the situation has developed.

Sub Committees:

Student Academic Appeals Committee: I attended a meeting via teleconference on Oct 13. These meetings are in camera.

GFC Exec: No meetings this month.

SRM Project – Student Advisory Group: No meetings this month.

AUSU MECC: Met on October 31, I was absent from the meeting on AUSU Business.

AUSU Awards: This committee is doing most of its work via email right now, but the November awards deadline is nearing! After the recent by-election we welcomed Amanda Lipinski and Robin Bleich to the committee.

October 2016

AUSU Finance: Met on October 26, I was absent on AUSU Business. We recently welcomed new council member Robin Bleich to the committee.

CASA: No meetings this month.

Sub Committees:

CASA Federal Policy Committee: I have been working hard on CASA policy! I have drafted an RESP policy that calls on the Government of Canada to provide the contribution amount to all Canadian children regardless of parental contribution. I also completed a new draft of an existing policy on the Post Secondary Student Support Program, to include the TRC recommendations and improve readability. Both will be brought forward to the CASA membership for approval at the plenary session in November.

Faculty Councils:

Faculty of Health Disciplines: No meetings this month.

Faculty of Business Undergraduate Program Council: No meetings this month.

Faculty of Business Faculty Council: I had to send my regrets to the October 25 meeting. I didn't receive the package until the day before and I had a previously scheduled meeting with Alain May and Cindy Ives. I have now received the dates for the meetings for the rest of the year and made adjustments to my calendar where needed.

AUSU Business

Changes for AUSU Council – Following a by-election in September, we are pleased to have a full group of 9 councillors once again! I am pleased to welcome Amanda Lipinski and Robin Bleich to AUSU Council.

CASA Advocacy Week – From November 13 – 18, Julian, Kim and myself will represent AUSU at CASA's federal advocacy week! We will meet with MP's and Senators on Parliament Hill to discuss a variety of student advocacy topics. We are also hosting an AUSU meet and greet in Ottawa while we are there!

Meetings

- 4 – AU employee recognition event
- 4 – AUSU Executive meeting
- 5 – Special meeting of AUSU
- 12 – General Faculties Council
- 13 – Student Academic Appeals Committee
- 13 – AUSU Council
- 14 – CASA Policy Committee
- 18 – GFC – APPSC

October 2016

19 – AUSU Executive meeting
19 – AU Board of Governors Orientation
20 – AU Board of Governors meeting
24 – AUSU Executive meeting
25 – Alain May and Cindy Ives
28 – CASA Policy Committee

Hours

Weekly Breakdown

Week ending:	Hours Worked	Banked Time Used	Banked Time Remaining
September 4	47	0	24.75
September 11	35	0	24.75
September 18	43	0	32.75
September 25	47.75	0	35
October 2	38.75	0	35

Timesheets and Compliance

I have reviewed timesheets from Kim Newsome and Julian Teterenko and found them to be within policy requirements, although at the time of writing this report I had not yet reviewed Julian's hours for the week ending October 30.

AUSU Executive Report

Julian Teterenko, VP External and Student Affairs

Prepared: November 1st, 2016



Committees

AUSU MECC:

See MECC Report.

AUSU Finance:

See Finance Report.

Learning and Teaching Student Advisory Group:

No meetings this month.

Student Systems Student Advisory Group:

No meetings this month.

ICT Governance Committee:

Discussed the proposed process for priority ICT investments for the fiscal year of 2018. The committee members will seek input from their respective constituencies following the December meeting and recommendations brought forth. The Committee also got a new interim chair as the former chair was on a six month administrative leave.

FST Faculty Council:

Attended the FST council meeting this month. Went through the new draft of the FST Strategic Plan and approved the draft copy. Discussed the Educational review and action Plan for the faculty. Good discussion on open educational resources and how the faculty is embracing them. Challenges from this were of a timely manner to getting it all together. Also discussed how the recent Student Success Centre in functioning and how it compared to the old model. There was some feedback from certain faculty members that they are not liking it as much as the old model. From an academic standpoint, the new model is seeing a lot of success for helping the students.

FHSS Faculty Council:

At this meeting we discussed the new Moodle Calendar system that is being worked on. This is exciting news as when implemented, it will allow students to change and play around with start and end dates for courses, and see when assignments and exams should be done according to whichever dates the student has set. Will also want to be able to see what to do at any certain day for the different courses the students have.

Also the new tutor model was discussed and some of the faculty members had feedback against it and were preferring the old model.

AUSU gave a presentation of the Mobile App that we have for students and was met with much positive feedback and praise that it is a great tool for the students.

AUSU Business

Changes to Council – A by-election was held for AUSU for two vacant seats on Council. Councillors Amanda Lipinski and Robin Bleich are now the newest addition to AUSU Council.

Lobbying – Executive council has been given the opportunity to attend the CASA Advocacy Week in November. All three Executives have registered to go to the conference in November. There student leaders from across the country gather together to meet with Members of Parliaments (MPs), Ministers, Senators, public servants and stakeholders to press for improvements to Canada's post-secondary education system.

FHSS Symposium – I attended a FHSS Symposium this month. Lots of information was discussed the first day about Open Educational Resources for the faculty and how they could go implementing them into the courses. Also discussed the first day was the Faculty Priority Actions for 2016-2017.

The second day of the symposium was filled with discussions about the tutor models and how they are doing compared to the old models, as well as specific research topics for the FHSS faculty and what certain faculty members are currently working on.

Tuition Review – I am reviewing the current documents sent out by the Government of Alberta about the current tuition review and freeze. This will be an ongoing process to find out as much information for AUSU members.

Meetings

October 4 – AUSU Executive Meeting

October 5 – AUSU Special Council Meeting/ by-election results

October 12 – Meeting w/ Pamela Walsh

October 13 – ICT Governance Meeting

October 13 – AUSU Council Meeting

October 14 – FHSS Council Meeting

October 19 – FST Council Meeting

October 19 – AUSU Executive Meeting

November 2016 Council Meeting

October 20 – Meeting w/ Richard MacLeod
October 24 – AUSU Executive Meeting
October 26 – Meeting w/ Dr. Lisa Carter
October 26 – AUSU Finance Committee Meeting
October 27 – Bylaw work group Meeting
October 28 – Bylaw work group Meeting
October 31 – MECC Meeting

Hours

Weekly Breakdown

Week of:	Hours
October 03 - 09	30.25
October 10 - 16	30.50
October 17 - 23	30
October 24 - 30	30

Timesheets and Compliance

I have reviewed Shawna's and Kim's timesheets and everything is in compliance according to policy.

October 2016

AUSU Executive Report

Kim Newsome, VP Finance & Administration

Prepared: October 30, 2016



Committees

Finance Committee:

See finance committee report.

Awards Committee:

Business as usual for this committee, several applications were discussed by email.

MECC Committee:

This month I helped track contest entries. I also contributed to newsletters and brainstorming documents as requested.

GFC (General Faculties Council):

Meeting held on October 12. AU had trouble sending this meeting package to Shawna and I and we ended up getting a link to the 173 page package on October 11. Shawna and I were both concerned that there was no mention in the entire package of the retrospective changes to FHD programs, concerns brought forward by AUSU in multiple meetings with AU execs, a recent letter that AUSU had sent to various AU execs, and the recent report written by Shawna about these changes.

Shawna decided to attend the meeting in person and request that an item be added to the agenda to provide an update from students on retrospective changes in the FHD. Shawna was able to speak on behalf of students on the impact of these changes and the position of AUSU. I was also able to take part in the commentary.

Interim VP Academic Cindy Ives made a verbal commitment to review policies, procedures and practices that might have to be changed in the future.

This was also President Fassina's first GFC meeting and he spoke several times of AU focusing on their academic mission and using the resources they already have to achieve success.

October 2016

GFC ALEC (Academic Learning Environment):

Meeting held on October 18. The meeting included a presentation of an Academic Analytics Tool that can be used for AU to identify factors that contribute to the success of students and better grades. It can also identify which parts of a course are used and their relation to student success.

This meeting also provided an update on student email and its implementation. A series of business related questions were presented for comment as part of the last steps of this implementation. AUSU had previously given input on these questions. There seemed to be general agreeance with the document presented and I believe that this will now go back to the IT department for the implementation and roll out.

Use of homework assistance websites, such as Coursehero and similar websites, is being discussed throughout AU. Students using these websites are at risk for charges of academic misconduct related to plagiarism and copyright infringement. AU is trying to take steps to communicate the risks with students.

A brief discussion on a reading list that was assigned to this group to read over the summer was held. The reading list focused on the future of teaching and learning in a distance environment. There were over 10 documents in the reading list. The overall theme of the documents seemed to be learner focused and the need to have up to date IT infrastructure. A further discussion will take place at the next meeting.

GFC AEAC (Academic Excellence Awards Committee):

No meetings this month.

FHSS Faculty Council:

Meeting held on October 14. This was the first FHSS Faculty Council meeting that I attended since becoming VPFA in April. The meeting opened with a demonstration of the new moodle calendar that is now available for course coordinators/instructors to request be added to their moodle courses. The features and customization options for the study calendar were very impressive. Students can input a desired start and end date and get a detailed study schedule. The calendar can adapt to study breaks and recalculate if you are ahead or behind of the schedule to redistribute the workload accordingly.

There was quite a long agenda of course closures and changes, all with little to no impact on students. Most courses that were permanently closing were already temporarily closed for some time. Some new courses were replacing closed courses. It was clear that no courses were closed that were required for programs/degrees. Also, anyone who had taken any of these closed courses before

October 2016

they were closed would still receive credit for these courses as electives where applicable.

AUSU's recent letter to VPIT Mike Battistel in support of consistency and fewer instances in Moodle was on the agenda and discussed. This was well received for the most part and comments of support were received.

At the request of Dean Veronica Thompson, I submitted a presentation on AUSU's mobile app. I spoke of the success and features of the mobile app. Attendees seemed excited about our success and interested in the capabilities of the app. Several people were downloading the app before my presentation was finished.

CASA Trades & Tech:

One meeting was scheduled and was not held. Nothing has been shared from other members of the committee.

AUSU Business

Policies

Due to heavy workload of executive committee members this month, policy review was a bit behind.

As part of a strategy to better manage executive councillor workload, minor revisions in several policies is included as a group in the November council meeting package. These revisions are related to changing the requirement that the president must sit as a voting member on every committee to only requiring the president to be an ex-officio non-voting member and adjusting attendance requirements accordingly.

Policy 2.12 was voted on for informal review and will be included in the November meeting package.

Policy 2.01 and 2.13 were identified as having a lot of overlapping information and it was decided that I would review and make a recommendation on combining the 2 policies. I have identified all of the duplicate information and will be discussing my recommendations at the November 2 executive meeting before completing further work on these policies.

October 2016

All of the HR policies were reviewed and discussed. A lot of redundancies were noted and a recommendation was made that I review further and combine into fewer policies. I have discussed this with Sarah since the execution of most of the HR policies would fall under her job description. We discussed which policies could be combined and how they should be categorized and I will work toward drafts of these in the next week or so.

Also, before the December council meeting I will be taking time to go through our policy due dates and ensure that we have reviewed all necessary policies to change to our new system so that we can now move to following the new policy review schedule starting January 2017.

Bylaws

Meeting October 27 and 28. Sarah did a lot of work on the current draft. The working group was able to meet over 2 days to review and comment on the draft. Several edits and recommendations were made. Work will continue with hope of a first draft for council review by December.

Meetings with Stakeholders

AUSU executive committee attended a meeting with AU Registrar Richard MacLeod this month. Mr. MacLeod was very engaging and interested in improving the student experience and partnering with AUSU where possible.

Some of the issues/concerns that we were able to discuss included:

- The possibility of being able to use degreeworks to see courses taken/needed for programs other than the current program that a student is registered in
- Possible partnership opportunities between AUSU and AU to improve or access features of the mobile app that we cannot currently use because of lack of info from AU
- Rising trends of Coursehero and plagiarism at AU

Other

This month I represented AUSU as a member of the Bryon Paege award committee. The Bryon Paege award is sponsored by CUPE local 3911 and is intended to recognize AU students that have demonstrated courage and/or resourcefulness worthy of commendation in the overcoming of, or currently coping with, some particular challenge or adversity in order to pursue distance education studies. The process was very quick as I received the application package on October 19 and had 5 days to review the applications and submit my individual scores. I enjoyed the process and am very happy with the committee's decision on the award recipient.

October 2016

Meetings

October 4 – AUSU Executive Meeting
October 5 – AUSU Special Council Meeting
October 11 – Meet with Shawna
October 12 – GFC Meeting
October 13 – AUSU Council Meeting
October 14 – FHSS Faculty Council Meeting
October 14 – GFC Orientation Session
October 18 – GFC ALEC Meeting
October 19 – AUSU Executive Meeting
October 20 – AUSU Executive Meeting with Richard MacLeod
October 24 – AUSU Executive Meeting
October 26 – Meet with Sarah
October 26 – AUSU Finance Committee Meeting
October 27 – AUSU Bylaw Working Group Meeting
October 28 – AUSU Bylaw Working Group Meeting

Hours

Weekly Breakdown*

Week ending:	Hours Worked:	Banked Hours Used:
October 2	24.5	5.5
October 9	27.5	2.5
October 16	29	1
October 23	30	0
October 30	30	0

Banked hours remaining at end of month: 0

October 2016

Timesheets and Compliance

I have reviewed Shawna and Julian's timesheets and found that their weekly hours for October were in compliance with policy.

Executive Motions

October 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">BIRT AUSU Executive Council has performed an informal review of Policy 2.12 – Harassment as per AUSU Policy 1.01 and determined as of October 24, 2016, no formal review is required. <p>Moved: K.Newsone Second: S.Wasylyshyn</p> <p>Motion Carried: 3/0</p>

Committee Report

Finance Committee



Prepared by: Kim Newsome, Chair

Date: November 28, 2016

Meeting: November 26, 2016.

Attendance: S.Wasylyshyn (Absent on AUSU business) and Andrew Gray (Absent on vacation)

Committee Members: Kim Newsome (Chair), Shawna Wasylyshyn (President), Julian Teterenko, Scott Jacobsen, Andrew Gray, Robin Bleich, Sarah Cornett (Ex-officio)

Monthly Activity

Meeting was held on November 26 to review the financial statements for August and September 2016, which is also year end for AUSU.

This was Robin's first meeting with this committee and it provided an opportunity for all of us to get a refresher on the makeup of our financial statements and things to look for when reviewing each one.

The financial statements for August were approved by the committee.

The financial statements for September were reviewed in draft form. Year end adjusting entries and any other adjusting entries required by our auditor have not been completed yet so these are not the final versions of these statements. Some areas were identified as needing adjustment or to be brought to the attention of our bookkeeper.

Overall, AUSU will end the year with a much smaller deficit than projected.

October 2016 Council Meeting

Committee Report

Awards Committee

Prepared by: Scott Jacobsen

Date: November 2, 2016

All Business Conducted By Email

Committee Members: Scott Jacobsen (Chair), Kim Newsome, Shawna Wasylshyn, Sarah Cornett (ex-officio).



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Activity This Month

It was fairly typical month with motions as listed below. We approved one computer bursary and one emergency bursary, and have one healthcare bursary undergoing consideration now (in voting).

One computer bursary was considered extensively and approved. We went back to a previous award to gather further justification to approve or deny the bursary. There was one emergency bursary considered and approved, and to be paid for within the 2015/2016 budget. One healthcare bursary is in and undergoing regular processes now, which is voting at the moment.

There were informal talks and formal training connected to readings for new committee members Amanda Lipinski and Robin Bleich.

With the new fiscal year, the award financials have been, at least in paper, restarted as shown in the table at the bottom.

Motions/Decisions

October 5, 2016: Emergency approved for two course extensions.

Original Motion:

October 14, 2016: BIRT AUSU Awards Committee approve the attached Computer Bursary Application for XXXX.

Mover: S. Jacobsen.

Seconder: by K. Newsome.

This motion passed 2/1.

Original Motion:

October 31, 2016: BIRT AUSU Awards Committee approve the attached Healthcare Bursary Application for XXXX.

Mover: S. Jacobsen.

Seconder: by S. Wasylshyn.

October 2016 Council Meeting

This motion is in voting now.

Awards Overview

This data represents year-end data for the 2016/2017 Fiscal Year

Award	Apps	Approved	Denied	Notes	Remaining Awards	Remaining Budget
Academic Achievement Scholarship					4	\$4,000
AUSU Bursaries					10	\$10,000
Computer Bursaries	1	1		1 - \$599.54	12	\$9,000.46
Single Parent Bursary					2	\$2,000
Travel Bursaries						\$4,000
Emergency Bursaries	1	1		1 - \$334		\$5,666
Health Care Bursary						\$17,000+/-
Student Service Award				Additional "Peter McKinnon Student Services Award" for November awards cycle	5	\$5,000
Returning Student Award					4	\$4,000
Balanced Student Award					4	\$4,000
Total	2	2				\$64,66.46

The table includes only the applications that were reviewed by the Awards Committee. It does not include any applications that were disqualified and did not meet minimum criteria. Disqualified applications do not get sent to the committee.

Committee Report

Member Engagement & Communications Committee

Prepared by: Julian Teterenko, Chair

Date: November 1, 2016



Committee Members: Julian Teterenko VPEX, Kim Newsome VPFA, Shawna Wasylyshyn President, Dixie Toliver Councillor, Scott Jacobsen Councillor, Jody Waddle Member at Large, Sarah Cornett Executive Director, Donette Kingyens Communications Coordinator.

Activity This Month

AUSU #igo2AU Contest

The contest now has over 500 entries and is going well. The amount of AUSU Course surveys has risen since the contest was started. The contest ends at the end of this month.

Social communications

I have started a document that outlines our Social Communication Strategy that we will be compiling all the information into. The committee has agreed that there is now enough information to put into the document. The document is a current work in progress that will continue to be worked on through the next month.

Mobile App

We decided to send out a push notification on the app this month specifically about the awards deadlines. This was successful and we received more applications for the awards since the notification went out.

AUSU Swag

The committee has decided on which pencil cases and toques that we would like to purchase, and the amount, to give to our members. This is now in the process of being ordered.

AUSU Pocket Calendar

The committee has decided on which calendar to order, and the amount, for the 2017 year and they are now in the process of being ordered.

New AUSU Banner

The committee has agreed on purchasing a new banner for AUSU. The design with what services that we offer and colour scheme is currently being finalized, as well as the exact costs to purchase it.

Texting System

The committee had decided on a system to implement and AUSU staff has gone forward with this and has been implemented.

Committee Report

Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee



Prepared by: Sarah Cornett, Chair
Date: November 2, 2016

Meetings: October 18 and 26, 2016

Committee Members: Sarah Cornett (Chair and Editor in Chief), Karl Low (Managing Editor), Scott Jacobsen (Councillor), Carla Knipe (Writer), Bonita Arbeau, Lyle Harvey, Alex Pappas, Lisa Sinclair

Monthly Activity

The committee met twice in October and will plan for a meeting in November to consider council's initial reaction to its report and discuss any further action, if any, it may take to complete its terms of reference.

The minutes, including one draft set, are circulated with this report.

The committee continued to do much of its work using topic specific email threads to build on ideas from the meetings. Many committee members have taken ownership of a specific issue to moderate the thread and compile input.

The previous topics of discussion continued, including the following:

- A new mission statement for The Voice and recommendations for consistent use.
- A draft terms of reference for an editorial advisory committee for The Voice and recommendations for its implementation.
- Potential ways that AU students in writing related course/programs can contribute to both The Voice and their studies. The focus on advocacy for an AU journalism program was reduced in lieu of smaller and more realistic outcomes to support AU students and The Voice.
- A high level marketing plan for The Voice. Rather than preparing a plan, various recommendations for this work are contained in the final report.
- An outline of content recommendations for The Voice.
- An outline of format recommendations for The Voice.
- Review of The Voice autonomy agreement dated March 2008 and recommendations.
- Review of AUSU Policy 7.03 with recommendations related to the above.

The committee developed these components into a final report containing specific recommendations to improve The Voice's relevance and accessibility to the membership of AUSU and to increase its readership. That report is circulated with this meeting package for council consideration.



Athabasca University Students' Union

Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee Report

November 2, 2016

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Guiding Principles related to The Voice	3
3.0	The Voice Mission Statement	3
4.0	Editorial Advisory Committee	3
5.0	AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice Magazine	4
6.0	Autonomy Agreement dated March 2008	4
7.0	The Voice Form and Format	5
8.0	The Voice Content	6
9.0	Journalism Experience and Certification for AU Students	10
10.0	Marketing Plan	11
11.0	Summary of Recommendations	11
12.0	Conclusion	12
	Appendix I – AUSU Policy 8.09 - New	13
	Appendix II – AUSU Policy 7.03 – Revised	18

1.0 Introduction

The Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee was created as a joint ad hoc committee of the Athabasca University Students' Union Council and The Voice purposed towards assistance of the Council in fulfilling its stated goals, as follows:

The Voice – *Support The Voice as an important member service and form of communication of AUSU*

1. Work collaboratively with The Voice to help create a meaningful action plan to improve the publication and increase readership by:
 - Providing support to The Voice as requested to ensure a successful consultation process;
 - Reviewing and making recommendations to the action plan as presented by The Voice;
 - Supporting the implementation of the action plan through non-financial resources, as agreed.
2. Work collaboratively with The Voice to develop a procedure to review and reassess the action plan on a regular basis that shall include:
 - Inviting The Voice to meet with Council to discuss the successes and challenges at defined points in the action plan;
 - Making recommendations to The Voice on potential ideas where AUSU can help with the identified challenges.

In performing its role, the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee was charged to keep at the forefront of its actions, communications, deliberations, and decisions that The Voice and Council both exist because of, are funded by, and serve, the undergraduate students of Athabasca University.

The primary objectives of the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee were:

- a) to create a meaningful action plan to improve The Voice's relevance and accessibility to the membership of AUSU and to increase its readership;
- b) to make recommendations on how AUSU Council can support the implementation of the action plan through non-financial resources; and
- c) to develop a procedure to review and reassess the action plan on a regular basis, including but not limited to:
 - i. meetings between representatives of The Voice and AUSU Council to discuss the successes and challenges at defined points in the action plan; and
 - ii. identifying potential ideas where AUSU Council can help with the identified challenges.

Additional objectives of the committee were:

- a) to review and make recommendations for the various governing documents of The Voice including its mission, mandate, and the Voice/Council autonomy agreement; and
- b) to review and make recommendations on the roles and responsibilities of the managing editor and editor in chief of The Voice.

This report and the documents appended to it, contain the recommendations to AUSU Council and The Voice staff that fulfill the above objectives.

Committee members were appointed following the process defined by the committee's terms of reference, which was in itself, a joint project of AUSU Council and The Voice staff. The members were:

AUSU Executive Director and The Voice Editor in Chief Sarah Cornett (Chair)
AUSU Councillor Scott Jacobsen,
The Voice Managing Editor Karl Low,
The Voice writer representative Carla Knipe,
The Voice regular reader Bonita Arbeau,
The Voice regular reader Alex Pappas,
The Voice non-regular reader Lyle Harvey,

The Voice non-regular reader Lisa Sinclair

The chair would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants. Each contributed to this report and to the future of The Voice.

2.0 Guiding Principles related to The Voice

The committee developed a list of guiding principles that it considered important in managing and producing The Voice and enabling it to achieve its mission. The following is a description of those themes.

- The Voice must be accountable to the people who pay for The Voice, that is the undergraduate students of Athabasca University. That is, the members of AUSU.
- AUSU includes all undergraduate student members, The Voice, and AUSU Council and staff; all are part of the whole organization created by the Post-Secondary Learning Act of Alberta (PSLA).
- AUSU Council is elected to manage member resources, and, therefore, is answerable to the membership for the management aspects of The Voice such as staff, budgets, and transparency.
- The managing editor should continue to oversee the publishing of The Voice, but shouldn't be expected to continue to do all the work and make all the decisions autonomously.
- The editor in chief of The Voice is ultimately responsible for the publication.

3.0 The Voice Mission Statement

The committee members noticed that there were different versions of a mission statement for The Voice in various places, including several pages on The Voice website and in AUSU Policy 7.03.

As an initial exercise, which helped to build an understanding of The Voice itself, the committee developed a recommended mission statement. Building on the existing statements, the recommendation embodies some key components of the committee's further recommendations.

The recommended statement is as follows:

The Voice is mandated to engage and inform readers by delivering a high quality periodic digital publication for the AUSU membership.

The Voice is the official publication of Athabasca University students, the members of Athabasca University Students' Union. Our mandate is to engage readers with unique content including stories and analysis of the people, places, and things that make the AU Community one of the most dynamic in the world. Furthermore, we will regularly deliver a top-notch digital publication that provides captivating articles, up-to-date and insightful news, and entertaining columns. We maintain an open submissions policy and encourage student and community participation.

The Voice offers unique Canadian perspectives extended globally. Foremost, we are a collaborative community project dedicated to the student body of Athabasca University.

We are AUSU, AU students, and this is our Voice.

4.0 Editorial Advisory Committee

The primary recommendation of the committee is the creation of a standing committee of AUSU to be called The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee (EAC), as described in Section 4.0 below and Appendix I attached. Virtually all the committee's recommendations relate to this primary recommendation.

The recommended terms of reference for The Voice EAC, which is appended to this report, contains clauses which cover the guiding principles described in section 2.0 above.

The creation of this standing committee of AUSU would serve to link The Voice, AUSU Council, and AUSU members by ensuring The Voice is fulfilling its mission statement thus ensuring accountability.

The relationship between this committee, AUSU, and AUSU Council is determined by the principles of good governance which require that a committee has a management/oversight body. The oversight body will be the AUSU Council as the elected representatives of the membership. The terms of reference should articulate the difference between this management structure and the editorial independence of The Voice.

The committee further recommends that the EAC be created as soon as possible, and that AUSU Council appoint a Councillor at the earliest opportunity to assist in the creation of the EAC and in preliminary work implementing the recommendations of this report until the EAC can take over that responsibility. This Councillor may be the first to fill the committee position of Council liaison.

5.0 AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice Magazine

A further recommendation of the committee, which is complementary to the creation of The Voice EAC, is the revision of AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice Magazine. The changes that are recommended serve to do the following:

- Include the recommended new mission statement.
- Work in tandem with the terms of reference of The Voice EAC to cover the principles listed in section 2.0 above by:
 - Embedding in the policy the principles of The Voice's editorial autonomy from AUSU Council and the EAC's role in managing the editorial direction in a fully accountable manner but separate from Council;
 - Embedding in the policy the functions of the complete Voice management team including the EAC, the editor in chief, and the managing editor;
- Maintain the key portions of the current policy including editorial policy, funding, advertising standards, and ethical standards; and
- Move items which are more appropriate for the job descriptions of The Voice staff to the appropriate documents.

6.0 Autonomy Agreement dated March 2008

The committee is fully committed to the principle of editorial autonomy for The Voice. While The Voice must be accountable to the membership, and while AUSU Council is responsible for the operation and management of The Voice as a part of AUSU, The Voice must have the trust of the membership as an impartial and autonomous source of news, information, and opinion about Council itself. In short, The Voice must be free to critique Council without fear of reprisal, or the appearance of compromise.

The committee believes that there are sufficient safeguards to ensure that The Voice will produce content within a framework of responsible and ethical journalistic principles contained in policy 7.03, in the terms of reference for the EAC, and in the responsibilities of The Voice staff contained in employment contracts.

However, the committee also believes that there are several problematic aspects of the autonomy agreement dated March 2008. The committee does not believe that there is any benefit, or foreseeable plans, to have The Voice answerable to and paid for by Athabasca University itself. This would come with similar, or even magnified, concerns about editorial freedom for a student publication. In addition, the combination of the current management framework for The Voice and the autonomy agreement leaves very little room for accountability to the AUSU membership for a significant portion of their membership fees and a significant financial reserve from past membership fees.

The committee has designed its other recommendations, specifically the creation of The Voice EAC and changes to policy 7.03, to ensure the benefits of editorial autonomy without jeopardising member accountability.

7.0 The Voice Form and Format

The Joint AUSU Council/Voice Action Plan Committee discussed and debated the potential impact of various changes to the form, format, and frequency of The Voice. Throughout this discussion, we identified four primary goals for any recommendations we would make in this area:

1. To increase student readership of The Voice, thereby increasing the number of AUSU members who benefit from this service;
2. To attract and retain quality writers for The Voice;
3. To ensure that the format of The Voice is appropriate to support the content recommendations put forward by this committee;
4. And, to achieve the above goals while giving strong consideration to the current financial and personnel resources available to The Voice.

With these goals in mind, our discussions lead us to the following conclusions and/or recommendations.

The Voice “Magazine”

We discussed whether The Voice is best classified as a magazine, newspaper, or something else altogether. After consideration of the typical features of these alternatives, we agreed that the term “digital magazine” encompasses the goal that the Voice aims to achieve in its mission statement of providing a variety of articles, news items, and opinion columns.

Frequency of Publication

This committee discussed two possibilities for the frequency of publication, which we recommend that The Voice staff and/or the EAC explore in more depth:

1. The Voice could continue to offer a weekly publication and recruit additional help. In order for The Voice staff to add new content, recruit new writers, effectively market the magazine, increase its social media presence, develop a new website or achieve any other goal that is set by the EAC, The Voice would need to hire an additional staff member to help support the Managing Editor on at least a part-time basis to manage the workload. It is important to note, however, that the hiring of an additional staff member would create budget challenges for the Voice and would necessitate a budget deficit and draw from reserves. The Voice staff's time is currently occupied with producing a weekly publication, so in the absence of additional personnel, maintaining a weekly publication would mean status quo. It has been noted that many Voice writers would likely prefer to maintain a weekly publication.
2. The Voice could change to a bi-weekly hybrid format that includes a bi-weekly publication along with additional weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly columns or blogs posted directly to The Voice's website. Reducing the publication frequency of the full magazine would free up time and financial resources for Voice staff to be able to pursue initiatives such as marketing, building new relationships with AU, recruiting writers, helping writers to develop their skills, and many other tasks that The Voice does not presently have the resources to undertake. A bi-weekly publication could also allow regular writers the opportunity to spend more time researching and refining their articles.

Format

This committee recommends that The Voice move to a hybrid delivery model, as is increasingly common in modern digital publications. This would include a periodic weekly or bi-weekly publication that is produced for the benefit of a regular readership, along with additional weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly columns and/or blogs that are posted directly to The Voice's website. For example, the website could contain a monthly blog about an Athabasca University student's travels, a weekly column that features AU news or highlights student accomplishments, or a regular column on any topic of interest to AU students. These additional offerings could help to draw more readers to The Voice's website by appealing to a wider range of AU undergraduate students and by consistently providing fresh marketing and social media material.

Method of Distribution

With The Voice's current resources, this committee believes that the most practical distribution method for The Voice is to continue as a digital magazine with (1) a PDF posted online with each regular publication and (2) articles and columns available for viewing directly on The Voice website. In addition, this committee also recommends that e-mail notifications be sent to all AUSU members (except for those who unsubscribe) when a new edition of The Voice is posted to the website or on a periodic basis. Currently, an email of this nature is only sent to those who have specifically subscribed to receive one. This email notification could include the highlights of recent articles to draw students to The Voice's website.

Additionally, the committee recommends that methods to convert the PDF to an easily accessible format on tablet and portable devices be examined further.

Website

This committee supports the use of The Voice reserve funds for the development of a new www.voicemagazine.org website, and recommends that this process be started as soon as possible. The website should be user-friendly, attractive, and designed to maximize student interaction, including standard features such as polls, regular student blogs, news columns, and more. Ideally, the website should be designed so that it can be updated by The Voice staff in order to minimize future expenses and to allow ultimate flexibility in making changes (e.g. add new columns or polls) to the website as needed.

Student Participation and Feedback

To accommodate timely feedback on articles and to increase students' engagement with The Voice, this committee recommends that the new website provide an avenue for students to make comments on articles and/or to participate in moderated discussions. This may require the use of tools such as a disclaimer and/or policy statement, unique student identifiers such as signing in through Facebook or providing student number (hidden from public view) and full name, and the approval of comments by a moderator before they are posted to the website.

With respect to implementing these recommendations, the committee suggests that with the support of a Council liaison as outlined in section 4.0, and subsequently with the support of The Voice EAC, an action plan can be developed that will incrementally take The Voice in the recommended direction with appropriate decision points identified along the way.

8.0 The Voice Content

The Joint AUSU Council/Voice Magazine Action Plan Committee discussed and debated aspects related to the content management of The Voice. The committee started by looking at input from the recent member services survey, considered information about the current writing team provided by its writer liaison Carla Knipe, and suggested some ways forward for further consideration.

Background from the most recent AUSU members services survey

- Of the 433 people who answered Q25, "What feature do you find to be most useful in The Voice Magazine," the top three responses were 1. News Articles (33.95%), 2. AUSU Update (22.63%) and 3. Interviews (18.48%)
- None of the other categories rated over about 8%
- Suggestions in the comments section included the following content requests:
 - More news on what's happening with AU, keeping in mind the diversity and dispersion of AU students;
 - Information particular to AU's unique online-school setting, including developing relationships with tutors, study habits and tips on getting into graduate school;
 - More interviews with AU faculty;
 - More student input, including information on how to contribute; and
 - More information on employment forecasts for new graduates, job opportunities, start-up businesses by alumni, internship opportunities, and interviewing tips.

Positive Aspects of the Writing Team

- The Voice writing team works well together with each other and with the managing editor, Karl Low. Even though they are based across Canada, the Slack channel provides a way for them to interact with each other, as well as to plan and discuss what articles they are writing.
- Managing editor Karl Low actively engages with writers and critiques their articles so that the writers can improve their craft.
- Although the writers do not currently have a specific mandate to write a certain type of article (e.g. a news “beat”), several writers have a specific, self-chosen platform from which to write. Each week, the writers strive to provide timely content that reflects the diverse student body at AU as well as trends and current events.

Challenges Faced by the Writing Team

- Whereas all writers have a connection to AU, either as current AU students or alumni, they are neither full-time writers nor staff writers or professional journalists. They have other work, volunteer, school and family commitments which all affect how much time they can devote to writing for The Voice. They are paid per piece and most write something every week for The Voice, but this is not always possible due to course loads, personal issues, etc. It is challenging to come up with fresh content every week and write high quality and consistent pieces.
- The Managing Editor has mentioned to the writing team that he would like to see more investigative reporting especially on AU issues, but often the writers do not have a lot of time to spend on research. Also, a large factor in whether news stories are covered is that writers are not trained journalists, so they do not have the skills or a network of sources in order to effectively research.
- Most writers have been writing for The Voice for several years. Needless to say, they are an integral part of keeping the magazine viable. However, other than immediate payment, there are no other perks or incentives for writers or direct or increased opportunities through The Voice to start or grow a writing career.
- The Managing Editor has put out regular calls for new writers to join the team but has not had a lot of response. Potential writers have expressed initial interest in writing, but then their interest fizzles when confronted with the reality and rigors of writing for publication. Therefore, it is difficult for Karl Low to recruit a writing talent pool and maintain interest.
- The Voice is now a member of the Canadian University Press (CUP) group, but because Athabasca University is without a campus like other universities, it is in a unique position compared to the rest of the group’s members. Tangible support from CUP in terms of getting content and growing The Voice has been minimal.

Insights from Current Voice Writing Team

Writer 1: “The Voice is a unique student magazine in that, of course, AU students are not all full-time nor in the same geographic location. The content of the magazine has to reflect that. There needs to be a balance of articles directly related to student life, and those that are not. Being an AU student means that “we do not live in an “academic bubble” as almost all other universities do.” Students are part of the AU community but function in their own communities outside of AU as well.

“The content of The Voice should be varied. Some should pertain to AU, dealing with studying through distance, hearing who the others students are, what issues they face, but also, what is happening in the world in general, what is happening in politics and general social-movements.

“I think the issue of readership is not in the content, or at least not in that it should be “geared towards student life” but towards students actually KNOWING it exists. I was with AU for two years before I knew there was a student publication. Finding this out made me feel connected to other students, it gave me a sense of community. Not to mention a wonderful group of writers who are always eager to chat about ideas.”

Writer 2: “In reading other campus publications definitely most articles are geared toward a campus environment. Some have satirical articles (The Gauntlet, for example, had an article about the student union offering to allow students to donate organs to reduce textbook fees <http://www.thegauntlet.ca/students-union-starts-organ-donation-clinic-to-help-students-afford-textbooks/> and a tongue-in-cheek student horoscope <http://www.thegauntlet.ca/what-does-the-new-school-year-have-in-store-for-you/>). This satire and humour is missing in The Voice, as some articles should be purely for fun to give students a mental break from study and other worries.

"As a writer, I do find it difficult to come up with article ideas each week (and I am determined to submit an article each week because it promotes good writing discipline.) I try to vary my articles, too, between AU- and AUSU-related info, student tips, and personal/humorous essays. Because I've been writing for several years and the pay per article is so low, I tend to avoid writing articles that will take up too much time in research or interviews, although I do those from time to time. I feel like I've "given" enough of my time to The Voice and AUSU and I'm frankly surprised that there has been no increase in writer fees.

Writer 3: "The biggest question I have as a writer is, is our writing and the content "hitting the mark". Getting feedback from anywhere, other than Karl, is hard. Is my writing and The Voice in general being valued by staff and students? So I think that one of the big things in growing content is really improved marketing and letting readers know that The Voice is out. Maybe that will give writers more confidence to improve the content and grow the magazine.

Writer 4: "I write my particular column but I do write the occasional story as well. I enjoy writing for The Voice. I understand that it is a student newspaper and most of the content should be student related, but I also think there should be a section showcasing student and alumni writings. One thing that I miss is the yearly writing contest. I believe there was a non-fiction and fiction category. In addition to the winners, there would be other stories that could be published throughout the year that showcased student and alumni writing."

The Voice and Athabasca University

One key way to grow the content of The Voice is to forge an increased relationship with Athabasca University. Currently, because The Voice is under the umbrella of AUSU, there is perhaps a perception that it is separate from other AU communications, including social media, printed media and other Department of Communications channels. One large concern is that faculty, staff and tutors are not aware of the role of The Voice and its role. The Communications Director, John O'Brien, was asked by Carla Knipe about how the Communications Department could support the student newspaper now and in the future.

One concern that Carla raised with Mr. O'Brien is that AU students often find out news regarding AU through external news sites and blogs and not from AU itself. An example of this was the stories in 2015-16 that predicted the demise of AU as well as the most recent AU budget that predicted financial insolvency. These external sites give a particular slant to a news story and do not give a full picture for students. Learning about important news stories such as these from internal AU news sources and the relevance and consequences they specifically have for the AU community, especially students, would provide a different perspective and give a degree of reassurance that students are hearing about important matters from an AU-based source first, rather than an external source. This communication would also benefit the AU community as a whole because it gives the perception of openness, honesty and trustworthiness. Also, two separate sources from AU confirmed to Carla that there is a leak from somewhere within AU to news sites such as rabble.ca and the blog <http://albertapolitics.ca>, but they do not know who the leak is and what agenda this person has in leaking these stories. The Communications Director stated that he reads The Voice, but had the following to say about whether or not the Communications Department can release information to The Voice is below:

"So, no, we won't be working separately with the Voice to get these types of stories out to the student body before they are public. Confidential documents may continue to be leaked, but that won't be coming from my office. Communications is responsible for all corporate communications (which are, by necessity formal) as well as the public-facing stories we publish at news.athabascau.ca. Open, as you acknowledge, is another vehicle. As for Open magazine, everyone who writes for that magazine has years of experience in journalism, and the magazine has won multiple awards, but we're always open to pitches from students for either site. I'm open to working together to make The Voice a better publication, but remember that my first responsibility is to the university. We're not acting as journalists in our roles here, and certain information we receive will remain confidential."

Another way to grow the content of The Voice is to get quotes and solid information from AU faculty and staff, not only for articles pertaining directly to AU news but as experts in chosen their academic fields. When writers have approached other tutors, faculty or staff as sources for information and quotes for news articles (such as facts and figures or as an authority in an area of expertise), the representatives from AU did not respond to the request for information. Therefore, it is difficult and frustrating for The Voice writers to know who would be a resource for solid, AU-based information to add depth to their articles and/or back up their research. In other words, finding AU faculty and staff willing to contribute to meaningful articles is very difficult at present. Because of the lack of a traditional campus, writers cannot simply walk to an AU staff member's office and ask for that information in person.

Also, the lack of a traditional campus means that news coverage for The Voice will be different than at other universities. There are no sports teams or campus events for the writers to cover or the ability for “word on the street” type reporting. This makes getting any news “scoops” or information even more challenging for writers.

Committee Suggestions

The committee agreed that they would like to see an increased focus on straight news items on varying topics in The Voice. This would be critical to the future success of the magazine. The specific suggestions include:

- AU-related news, changes at AUSU, new appointments, funding changes, new programs and partnerships, in addition to general news about what is happening at other campuses that all U students can relate to;
- Social media top 10s, for example, top 10 tweets of the week;
- Opinions, editorials and features on a variety of topics. The direction of these articles could be defined by the editorial committee. For example, highlighting what is happening across Canadian universities and specifically celebrating the successes and stories of AU students and alumni.
- Establish a few regular columns or a rotating schedule of columns depending on available resources, for example, study strategies, tech, and lifestyle;
- Provide an AU-based “slant” on current events. A designated Voice writer could focus on how particular current events affects students, or news-related opinion pieces. Although there is currently a small pool of writers, ideally it would be nice to have a student from a discipline write about that topic - for example, if the story is about the U.S. Election, have a political science student write on how the outcome of the election will affect Canadians. It would be beneficial to AUSU membership to be able to hear the perspective of other AU students on current events & popular topics. This would require targeted recruiting of writers from across AU disciplines.

Some possible ways forward

1. Increased marketing of The Voice will be key to raise awareness both among students and the wider AU community. Many students, and perhaps AU faculty and staff members, do not currently know that The Voice exists. Also, an assertive and effective marketing and awareness campaign needs to be considered and implemented in order to get students, faculty and staff and the community beyond AU to recognize and care about The Voice’s role within Athabasca University. ***Working question: How can The Voice be better marketed and branded to the AU community?***
2. The Voice would benefit from an alliance with the wider AU community, such as faculty, staff, tutors and other groups such as alumni. This would benefit The Voice on many levels; but crucially, this would help The Voice create and maintain a network of willing sources that its writers can consistently rely on to get more in-depth reporting to the articles they write. ***Working question: How can The Voice be recognized as part of the overall AU Communications process?***
3. Find a way to recognize the talents and strengths of The Voice’s writing team. This would strengthen the success of the current writers as individuals and ultimately benefit The Voice as a publication. Part of the marketing strategy for The Voice might be to emphasize that being a writer for The Voice can be a highly beneficial way for students to grow their writing skills beyond their academic coursework, and a paid writing position, such as what The Voice provides, is a stepping stone to establishing a writing career should writers choose to pursue that option. Some ways to do this might be to establish a mentorship program between student Voice writers and professional established writers and journalists, or to provide a fund where writers can take courses through other institutions that offer such courses on growing their writing skills portfolio, such as learning how to pitch story ideas, effective research skills, how to establish writing platforms and self-marketing. In the interim of establishing a formal “Athabasca Faculty of Journalism” or “Athabasca School of Creative Writing” this might be a good measure to retain the current pool of writing talent as well as provide incentives to attract new writers, instead of or in addition to increased monetary reimbursement.
4. Use the Canadian University Press (CUP) newswire to obtain stories, and ask for assistance from CUP on how they as an organization could support and grow the unique publication that The Voice is.
5. Investigate ways to bring attract more readers to The Voice Website. Because the e-mail alert requires students to first find the Voice website and then sign up, relatively few students do this. Perhaps this could be improved by a) having new students auto-subscribed (just like the AUSU newsletter) with the option of unsubscribing; b) having a promotion blitz to encourage sign-ups; and c) having the front cover of each week's

Voice displayed on the AUSU website. AUSU could also have a direct link to the sign-up page in one of their newsletters, prominently displayed (in fact they could make it the sole focus of one newsletter.)

With respect to implementing these recommendations, the committee suggests that with the support of a Council liaison as outlined in section 4.0, and subsequently with the support of The Voice EAC, an action plan can be developed that will consider each piece and incrementally take The Voice in the recommended direction with appropriate decision points identified along the way.

9.0 Journalism Experience and Certification for AU Students

The Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee considered a brief proposal for advocating for journalism through The Voice and the development of connections. We had some preliminary discussion and brief points and conversational outcomes through the committee.

We considered this a possibility to increase the extent and reach of The Voice. It would be a way to reach out to students in a greater capacity and represent AU in a great way. It would help The Voice be a fantastic resource for the student membership and be the best publication that it can be as a representation of the AUSU membership.

We find it a way to encourage a resource at AU that would help The Voice be the best publication that it could be. For example, if there were links to creative writing or creative non-fiction writing, a certificate program, and ultimately a journalism program, we could build links between the student newspaper, the programs, the certificate, and then morph this to build ties that could benefit everyone.

In addition, it can increase the pool of writers for The Voice. We could have professors and others refer students who would be a good fit for The Voice. This can increase awareness by building the connections. Even school assignments that could be submitted to The Voice can increase awareness and add writers for the magazine. These are related points.

One major question: Has there been anything like this in the past?

We can look at the current state of journalism programs in the province and observe the health of the programs now. There have been transitions into digitization for the journalism programs, which have been revamped on the photography and writing side. There are fewer jobs. We see what is happening in the newspaper and magazine industry. There could be problems in the viability for the program to come to fruition.

In other words, there has been a continual decline in the traditional print and broadcast-media jobs and careers. However, the reports on the demand appear to be mixed with regards to the program. Even so, journalism needs to adapt to this changing landscape, and an electronic magazine/newspaper such as The Voice might provide the necessary training ground for the future landscape.

With respect to implementing these recommendations, the committee suggests that with the support of a Council liaison as outlined in section 4.0, and subsequently with the support of The Voice EAC, an action plan can be developed that will incrementally take The Voice in the recommended direction with appropriate decision points identified along the way.

Some faculties that might some programs and course selections potentially incorporate into a journalism program or a certification:

- Centre for Humanities:
 - English
 - English Language and Writing Skills
- Faculty of Humanities and Social Science
 - [Classics](#)
 - [Communication Studies](#)
 - [Educational Studies](#)
 - [English](#)
 - [English Language & Writing Skills](#)

These could, potentially, be utilized to develop a certification through coordination with The Voice, where experience with The Voice is part of the process of accreditation. The publishing of articles and so on will benefit The Voice, the student, and the long-term reputation of the school with the training of the next generation of journalists.

10.0 Marketing Plan

Extending the readership of The Voice will be best facilitated by developing a marketing plan for The Voice. The committee noted that marketing The Voice is entwined with the building of a new website which is linked to plans for changes to form and format, so the whole process needs to be iterative. A plan can be developed that can begin in the short term and develop over the longer term to take into consideration growth and changes to content and form and format, which are contained in the sections above.

A general discussion on marketing included the following points:

- There could be a dedicated person on the EAC to look at marketing opportunities and strategies.
- The AUSU Communications Coordinator, Donette Kingyens, has skill sets and could do some work related to marketing The Voice. This would need to be coordinated by the Editor in Chief and paid for from The Voice funds.
- Starting small, some basic marketing could begin right away based on current content and format.
- The current budgeting process for The Voice should include marketing.
- Karl, Sarah, and Donette would lead the small start strategy.
- The EAC could look at larger items including a new look and feel, logo and branding, and an expert consultant should be used to complete the work.

With respect to implementing these recommendations, the committee suggests that with the support of a Council liaison as outlined in section 4.0, and subsequently with the support of The Voice EAC, an action plan can be developed that will incrementally take The Voice in the recommended direction.

11.0 Summary of Recommendations

The following is a summary list of the committee recommendations to Council and The Voice staff.

- Adopt the recommended revisions to The Voice Mission Statement
- Adopt the Terms of Reference for an Editorial Advisory Committee and implement as soon as possible
- Appoint a Councillor to the Council liaison position in the interim to set the stage for the EAC's work and to assist Council and The Voice staff in moving other recommendations forward.
- Adopt the recommended revisions to AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice Magazine including new sections reflecting editorial autonomy from AUSU Council
- Rescind the autonomy agreement dated March 2008
- Review the discussion paper on The Voice Form and Format with summary recommendations and assign the Council liaison Councillor to work with The Voice staff to look at possible action items with appropriate decision points identified along the way.
- Review the discussion paper on The Voice Content with summary recommendations and assign the Council liaison Councillor to work with The Voice staff to look at possible action items with appropriate decision points identified along the way.
- Review the discussion paper on Journalism Experience and Certification for AU students through The Voice with summary recommendations and assign the Council liaison Councillor to work with The Voice staff to look at possible action items with appropriate decision points identified along the way.
- Review the recommendation to develop a marketing plan for The Voice that can begin in the short term and develop over the longer term and assign the Council liaison Councillor to work with The Voice staff to look at possible action items with appropriate decision points identified along the way.

In order to achieve the overall Council goal to “*Support The Voice as an important member service and form of communication of AUSU*” it is suggested that Council continue to recognize the importance of this initiative and make it a priority for Council consideration and action based on this report.

12.0 Conclusion

When taken as a whole, the recommendations of the committee as described in sections 3.0 to 10.0, particularly the creation of The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee, the revisions to Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice Magazine, and rescinding the March 2008 autonomy agreement, will support a vital student publication which will continue to be a valuable AUSU member service with the mechanisms to improve and grow.

Within the pieces on form and format, content, journalism experience and The Voice, and a marketing plan, there are incremental steps that can be taken along the direction recommended by the committee. These steps will require additional planning that is outside the scope of this committee but will improve The Voice as a vital service of AUSU.

The committee members respectfully ask Council for its full consideration of this report and express the hope that The Voice will continue to thrive and grow with the full support of AUSU membership, Council, staff, writers, and a standing Editorial Advisory Committee.



Athabasca University
Students' Union

POLICY 8.09

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee

This text will not be part of the final policy but is provided in this draft as background to the concept discussed during the preparation of this terms of reference.

- *That the Voice must be accountable to the people who pay for The Voice i.e. the undergrad students i.e. the members of AUSU is essential in the publication of The Voice, not only in financial management but in editorial direction and in the content.*
- *AUSU includes all undergrad student members, and The Voice, and AUSU Council, and staff: all are part of the whole organization created by the Post-secondary Learning Act of Alberta (PSLA).*
- *AUSU Council is elected to manage member resources and so is answerable to the membership for management aspects such as staff, budgets, transparency, etc.; therefore, Council should have a liaison on the committee.*
- *The Managing Editor will continue to oversee the publishing of The Voice but shouldn't have to continue to do all the work, and make all the decisions, and be a sole individual responsible for editorial direction and content choices.*
- *That an Editor In Chief still has "the buck stops here" job.*
- *The committee provides oversight to ensure that The Voice is fulfilling its mission statement (fits into the theme of accountability) and the mission statement provides the focus for the committee.*
- *The relationship between this committee, AUSU, and AUSU Council.*
 - *Good governance requires that a committee has a management/oversight body.*
 - *The oversight body will be the AUSU Council as the elected representatives of the membership*
 - *This terms of reference should clearly articulate the difference between this management structure and the editorial independence of The Voice in the creation of this committee and in recommended changes to Policy 7.03 The Voice*

POLICY INTENT

This policy provides the terms of reference for The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee.

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Council

POLICY

Purpose

- 8.09.01 The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee is a standing volunteer committee formed to:
- a) ensure that The Voice is fulfilling its mandate;
 - b) set the editorial direction of The Voice;
 - c) assist the Editor In Chief and Managing Editor in creating editorial policy; and
 - d) assist the Editor In Chief and Managing Editor in the publication of The Voice.
- 8.09.02 In fulfilling its purpose, the committee represents the AUSU membership that funds and is the primary community served by The Voice, and, secondarily, other members of the broader Athabasca University community that are served by The Voice.

Scope

- 8.09.03 The scope of the committee is limited to matters pertaining directly to the Athabasca University Students' Union publication known as The Voice.

Authority

- 8.09.04 The committee has the following authority:
- a) to set the editorial direction of The Voice without interference or direction from AUSU Council;
 - b) to recommend the editorial policy of The Voice for adoption by AUSU Council;
 - c) to approve the annual budget for The Voice internally restricted reserve funds; however, this does not limit the authority of AUSU Council to audit The Voice finances at any time to ensure that the interests of the AUSU membership are protected;
 - d) to provide information and make recommendations to the Editor In Chief and Managing Editor related to the committee's objectives;
 - e) to provide information and make recommendations to AUSU Council; and
 - f) to make inquiries, conduct research, and collect data related to The Voice.

Objectives

- 8.09.05 The primary objectives of the committee will be:
- a) to represent the AUSU membership, that is the AU undergraduate students, in the publication of The Voice;
 - b) to set the editorial direction of The Voice, including but not limited to such things as areas of coverage, content guidelines, and publication form and format;
 - c) to assist in the responsible management of The Voice funds on behalf of the AUSU membership who provide those funds, including approving the annual budget for The Voice funds;
 - d) to assist the Editor in Chief and Managing Editor in creating editorial policy to be recommended to AUSU Council for adoption;
 - e) to provide human resources in support of The Voice staff including the Editor in Chief and Managing Editor; and
 - f) to make recommendations to AUSU Council related to supporting The Voice as an important member service and form of communication of AUSU.

Membership

- 8.09.06 The committee will have a maximum of eight and a minimum of six members including;
- a) the Editor in Chief, as ex-officio voting member;

- b) the Managing Editor, as ex-officio voting member;
- c) one AUSU Council liaison, non-voting;
- d) one Voice writer representative;
- e) between two and four AUSU member representatives who are AUSU members in good standing.

8.09.06.01 The AUSU Council liaison will be a Councillor appointed by the AUSU Council, subject to approval of the Editor in Chief and Managing Editor.

8.09.06.02 The Voice writer representative will be elected by the regular writers of The Voice, where 'regular writers' will be defined by Voice policy.

8.09.06.03 The AUSU member representatives will be elected by the AUSU membership in conjunction with, and using the same process as, AUSU Council elections.

8.09.06.03.01 Notwithstanding section 8.09.06.03, the first AUSU members' representatives will be appointed by AUSU Council, using a method agreed to by the other committee members as noted in section 8.09.06 a) through d).

8.09.06.04 The AUSU member representatives must meet the same membership requirements as set out in AUSU Policy 2.14 Council Governance: Councillor Responsibilities and Honoraria, sections 2.14.03 through 2.14.05 for AUSU Councillors at all times.

8.09.07 The term of a committee member will be two years and will run concurrently with AUSU Councillor terms.

8.09.07.01 A committee member may serve up to three consecutive terms.

8.09.07.02 After a period of two years not on the committee, a past committee member may rejoin the committee, and serve up to two additional terms.

8.09.08 The chair of the committee will be elected by the committee members.

8.09.08.01 The chair will serve a term of one year and may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms.

8.09.08.02 After a period of one year not in the chair, a past committee chair may return as chair, and serve for an additional two terms.

Member Commitment

8.09.09 Committee members should anticipate and be prepared to actively participate in the following:

- a) monthly teleconference meetings;
- b) occasional interim teleconference meetings;
- c) email, web-based or other digital discussions between meetings;
- d) specific project or research based tasks;
- e) assignment of specific responsibilities such as section editor, social media manager, and others to be defined by the committee itself from time to time;
- f) a face to face strategy session once per term if planned by the committee; and
- g) any other duties and responsibilities as may be agreed upon by the committee.

- 8.09.10 The AUSU Council liaison will be an active member of the committee and will also be responsible to relay relevant information and issues between the two bodies to support the mandates of, and facilitate a positive relationship between, AUSU Council and the committee, both of which serve the AUSU membership.
- 8.09.10.01 Notwithstanding the principles of editorial autonomy of The Voice from AUSU Council, the Council liaison person on the committee will be free to, and expected to, bring to the committee and/or to the Editor in Chief, any concerns Council may have regarding editorial direction or content for frank discussion and will do so in such a way as to serve the best interests of AUSU and its membership.
- 8.09.11 The Voice writer representative will be an active member of the committee and will also be responsible to relay relevant information and issues between the writers and the committee to support the mandates of, and facilitate a positive relationship between, the two groups, both of which strive to make The Voice a quality publication.
- 8.09.12 The AUSU member representatives will be active members of the committee and will also be responsible to ensure that the interests of the AUSU membership, for whom The Voice exists, are considered in fulfilling the committee's terms of reference.

Reporting

- 8.09.13 The committee reports to the AUSU membership (i.e. the undergraduate students of Athabasca University) through AUSU Council, the members' elected body.
- 8.09.13.01 The committee AUSU Council liaison will provide regular reports to AUSU Council as requested by Council.
- 8.09.13.02 The committee chair will provide an annual report to be published as part of the AUSU annual report to the membership.
- 8.09.14 The committee will make the following documentation available to the AUSU Council and the membership, in a manner that is reasonably accessible as determined by the committee:
- a) an annual budget for The Voice;
 - b) quarterly financial statements;
 - c) an annual financial audit report which will be part of the AUSU financial audit report;
 - d) the current committee terms of reference;
 - e) minutes of committee meetings;
 - f) summary of any research conducted;
 - g) a report of any projects completed;
 - h) all policy or procedural documents governing The Voice.

Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Code of Conduct

- 8.09.15 Committee members will be subject to the confidentiality, conflict of interest and bias, discipline, meeting attendance, harassment, code of ethics policies, processes and rules that apply to AUSU Councillors.

Resources

- 8.09.16 The committee members who are not AUSU executive or staff (including The Voice staff) shall receive the normal honorarium for committee work under current AUSU Policy 2.14 Council

Governance – Councillor Responsibilities and Honoraria for the Councillor, and AUSU Policy 2.07 Council Governance - Member Representatives on AUSU Committees for the others.

- 8.09.17 The honoraria shall be paid from AUSU operating funds for the AUSU Council liaison and from The Voice funds for others.
- 8.09.18 The committee shall have reasonable access to AUSU communication tools, such as the teleconferencing system and email system, for a fee based on cost recovery from The Voice internally restricted funds to AUSU operating funds.
- 8.09.19 Expenses noted in sections 8.09.16 through 8.09.18, and any other funds allocated to this committee, must be part of the annual budget of The Voice and come from The Voice internally restricted funds.

Communication Plan

- 8.09.20 The committee will regularly consider its responsibilities to the AUSU membership and its readership and will plan communications around its work, and make itself reasonably available for input accordingly.

Review

- 8.09.21 These terms of reference will be reviewed by the committee at least once every twelve months.
- 8.09.21.01 Any recommended changes will be provided to AUSU executive committee which will determine if the changes fit within the scope of an informal or formal review as described in Policy 1.01 Policy: Creation, Format, Maintenance & Review and will proceed with the appropriate approval process as per that policy.

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

This Policy References:

AUSU Policy 1.01 Policy: Creation, Format, Maintenance & Review
AUSU Policy 2.07 Council Governance: Member Representatives on AUSU Committees
AUSU Policy 2.14 Council Governance: Councillor Responsibilities and Honoraria

This Policy is Referenced by:

AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice Magazine

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date: Month DD, YYYY

Last Review Date: Month DD, YYYY (formal/informal)

Review by Date: Month YYYY *(Note: see policy 1.01 Appendix A for dates to insert here, note this date does not change based on last review date but stays constant on a 1 or 2 year schedule)*



POLICY 7.03

COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

The Voice Magazine

POLICY INTENT

The intent of this policy is to provide a framework for the management and publication of The Voice as a member service. *(Note: This has been updated reflect the policy's intent)*

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

Council *(Note: This has been changed from "Executive" to underline Council as the body elected by the membership.)*

POLICY

The Voice Mission and Mandate *(Note: This is a new section replacing the previous Policy Intent wording with the recommended new mission statement)*

7.03.01. The Voice is mandated to engage and inform readers by delivering a high quality periodic digital publication for the AUSU membership.

The Voice is the official publication of Athabasca University students, the members of Athabasca University Students' Union. Our mandate is to engage readers with unique content including stories and analysis of the people, places, and things that make the AU Community one of the most dynamic in the world. Furthermore, we will regularly deliver a top-notch digital publication that provides captivating articles, up-to-date and insightful news, and entertaining columns. We maintain an open submissions policy and encourage student and community participation.

The Voice offers unique Canadian perspectives extended globally. Foremost, we are a collaborative community project dedicated to the student body of Athabasca University.

We are AUSU, AU students, and this is our Voice.

Editorial Autonomy from AUSU Council *(Note: This is a new section to enshrine the concept of editorial autonomy in policy)*

7.03.02. To ensure The Voice maintains the trust of the AUSU Membership as the AU student voice it will have editorial autonomy from AUSU Council.

- 7.03.03. To ensure this autonomy, while maintaining accountability to the AUSU membership which funds The Voice, AUSU shall have a standing committee called The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee to set the editorial direction of The Voice including but not limited to such things as areas of coverage, content guidelines, and publication form and format, without interference or direction from AUSU Council.
- 7.03.04. It will be considered a conflict of interest and breach of the AUSU code of conduct for AUSU Council, or any AUSU Councillor, to influence, or attempt to influence, the editorial direction, or specific content of The Voice, outside of the forum of the The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee.
- 7.03.04.01 Notwithstanding the above, the Council liaison person on the The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee will be free to, and expected to, bring to The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee and/or to the Editor in Chief, any concerns Council may have regarding editorial direction or content for frank discussion, and will do so in such a way as to serve the best interests of AUSU and its membership.

Management and Operations (*Note: This is a new section to outline the management responsibility, as opposed to editorial autonomy*)

- 7.03.05. Management and operations of The Voice shall be undertaken by the following parties, herein referred to as The Voice management:
- a) The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee;
 - b) an Editor in Chief; and
 - c) a Managing Editor.
- 8.09.01.01 The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee will have its terms of reference contained in AUSU Policy 8.09 Terms of Reference: The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee. Its purpose will include to:
- b) ensure that The Voice is fulfilling its mandate
 - c) set the editorial direction of The Voice
 - d) assist the Editor In Chief and Managing Editor in creating editorial policy; and
 - e) assist the Editor In Chief and Managing Editor in the publication of The Voice.
- 8.09.01.02 The Editor in Chief will be the AUSU staff member primarily responsible for The Voice.
- 8.09.01.03 The Managing Editor will report directly to the Editor in Chief and will be the AUSU staff member primarily responsible for day-to-day management and operation of The Voice.

Editorial Policy (*Note: This is taken from the current policy with some amendments to update wording and remove some sections not considered necessary*)

- 7.03.06. The Voice's editorial policy is one of fair and equitable coverage and analysis, respectful commentary, and thoughtful opinion backed by thorough research.
- 7.03.07. In keeping with standard journalistic ethics, The Voice does not support or endorse any individual politician or political party or any individual faculty or department within the University; with the exception of content clearly identified as editorial content, which may contain personal opinions of the authors.
- 7.03.08. The Voice will strive for a professional presentation that is visually appealing, easy to navigate, and readily accessible to AUSU members and the wider AU community.

- 7.03.09. The Voice will be published in keeping with Canadian Press Journalistic Style.
- 7.03.10. The Voice will have a process for soliciting, receiving, and selecting content for publication that is open, transparent and fair.
- 7.03.11. The Editor-in-chief will make the final determination of suitability of content and may refuse any submissions that they deem to be in poor taste or in contravention to The Voice editorial policy or direction.
- 7.03.12. The Voice will include AUSU Council news or commentary provided by AUSU Council. This does not prejudice The Voice's ability to publish any other comments or articles on AUSU activities that are in keeping with its editorial policy.
- 7.03.13. Letters to the Editor shall be encouraged. Letters may be edited for length and format. If edited, the Voice editorial staff will ensure to the best of their ability that the political position or opinion of the initial letter remains unchanged.
- 7.03.14. A masthead will be present, identifying legal publishing rights, disclaimers, the address of The Voice and the Editor-in-chief, and The Voice website and email addresses. It will feature a disclaimer indicating that not all views presented are those of AUSU.
- 7.03.15. The Voice will conduct regular reader surveys to determine what the AUSU membership and other readership within the AU community want from The Voice. The primary focus will be on the AUSU membership who fund The Voice. All reasonable efforts will be made to obtain as much input as possible and the survey results will be used by The Voice management to inform the editorial direction, content, form and format of The Voice.

Funding *(Note: This section has been amended to clarify intent and work with new parts of Policy 6.07)*

- 7.03.16. Funding for The Voice will be designated by AUSU according to the AUSU Bylaws.
- 7.03.17. Any revenue generated by The Voice shall be designated for The Voice.
- 7.03.18. All funds designated for The Voice will be defined in AUSU Policy 6.07 Financial Management: Reserves and Investments, and described in AUSU financial statements, as internally restricted funds specifically for The Voice.
- 7.03.19. AUSU Council reserves the right to audit The Voice financials at any time to ensure the funds are being managed in the best interests of the AUSU membership.

Advertising *(Note: This section has been updated but reflect the current policy)*

- 7.03.20. The Voice management will determine advertising policy and pricing, including for public service announcements and classified ads, for The Voice that is in keeping with The Voice editorial policy and direction, and that will provide benefit to The Voice.
- 7.03.21. The Editor-in-chief will make the final determination of the suitability of advertising and may refuse any submission that they deem to be in poor taste, in contravention to The Voice advertising policy, or in any way undermines the integrity of The Voice or AUSU.
- 7.03.22. The Voice management may recruit sales representatives to solicit advertising for The Voice.

(Note: Sections on classified advertising and Editor-in-Chief responsibilities have been removed.)

Ethical Standards *(Note: With the exception of the last clause, this section is the same as the current policy)*

- 7.03.23. All employees, staff writers, and volunteers of The Voice will strive to present themselves in a professional manner.
- 7.03.24. The Voice employees, staff writers, and volunteers will be expected to be courteous and compassionate.
- 7.03.25. The Voice representatives may use their positions to influence access to information.
- 7.03.26. The Voice employees, staff writers, and volunteers shall not use or attempt to use their position to gain personal benefit from gifts, gratuities or hospitality of any kind.
- 7.03.27. The Voice employees, staff writers, and volunteers shall be bound by AUSU's Harassment Policy and any violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 7.03.28. The Voice staff writers should respect their sources and their right to confidentiality, where appropriate and within the guidelines of Canadian law.
- 7.03.29. The Voice staff writers must verify the accuracy of all they report.
- 7.03.30. The Voice staff writers will always make sure their subjects are aware of their intentions and their affiliation with The Voice, and obtain the names and consent of individuals photographed or interviewed. Names will be published when applicable and reasonable. This will include when staff writers seeking information through social media that are intended to inform or contribute to an article prepared for The Voice.
- 7.03.31. The Voice staff writers shall comply with all applicable copyrights legislation and obtain permission to use any material they publish in The Voice.
- 7.03.32. Any Voice staff or freelance writer who is deemed, at the sole discretion of the Editor in Chief, to have failed to abide by these ethical standards will no longer have content accepted for publication by The Voice.
 - 7.03.32.01 A warning may be issued at the sole discretion of the Editor in Chief.

(Note: The following sections are updated according new policy formatting guidelines)

RELATED REFERENCES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

This Policy References:

AUSU Bylaws
AUSU Policy 6.07 Financial Management: Reserves and Investments
AUSU Policy 8.09 Terms of Reference: The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee

This Policy is Referenced by:

AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice Magazine

POLICY HISTORY

Original Approval Date: October 23, 1999

Last Review Date: October 13, 2015 (formal)

Review by Date: October 13, 2017 *(Note: see policy 1.01 Appendix A for dates to insert here, note this date does not change based on last review date but stays constant on a 1 or 2 year schedule)*



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Athabasca University Students' Union

Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 26, 2016

DRAFT

11:00 am MDT

Meeting Called By: Sarah Cornett, Executive Director, Editor in Chief, Chair
Type of Meeting: Committee Meeting
Minutes: Sarah Cornett
Committee: Bonita Arbeau, Sarah Cornett, Lyle Harvey, Councillor Scott Jacobsen
Absent: Writer Carla Knipe, Managing Editor Karl Low, Alex Pappas, Lisa Sinclair

Agenda and Minutes

1.0 Adoption of Agenda S. Cornett

Motion: BIRT the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan committee adopt the agenda.

2016-10-26 Joint Council Voice Agenda.docx

B. Arbeau/L. Harvey

Carried 4/0

2.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes S. Cornett

2016-10-18 Joint Council Voice Minutes DRAFT.docx

Deferred due to draft minutes not being ready to approve.

Action Item - Committee

Old Business

3.0 Items to be Submitted to AUSU Council for November 8, 2016 Meeting All

The committee reviewed and accepted the following list of items to be included in the recommendation package to Council.

- Recommended revisions to The Voice Mission Statement
- Terms of Reference for an Editorial Advisory Committee and recommendation to implement
- Recommended revisions to AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice including new sections reflecting editorial autonomy from AUSU Council
- Recommendation to rescind autonomy agreement dated March 2008
- Discussion paper on The Voice Form and Format with summary recommendations
- Discussion paper on The Voice Content with summary recommendations
- Discussion paper on Journalism Experience and Certification for AU students through The Voice Magazine with summary recommendations
- Recommendation to develop a marketing plan for The Voice that can begin in the short term and develop over the longer term
- Summary document related to committee objectives as outline in its terms of reference (See agenda item 4.0 below)

New Business

4.0 Discussion on success in fulfilling objectives of the committee All

Sarah presented her summary of the committee's work related to the committee's objectives as stated in its terms of reference for discussion.

Those objectives are copied below in italics for reference.

The primary objectives of the committee will be:

- a) *to create a meaningful action plan to improve The Voice's relevance and accessibility to the membership of AUSU and to increase its readership;*

The committee will recommend:

- Adopting the new mission statement
- Creating an Editorial Advisory Committee (EAC) based on the terms of reference developed.
- Adopting a revised AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services: The Voice that coordinates with the EAC and replaces components of the autonomy agreement.
- Reviewing job description (duties and responsibilities) of editor in chief and managing editor contained in employment contracts, in cooperation with the Editor in Chief and Managing Editor, to replace sections removed from the Policy 7.03, reflect new content of the policy, and include working with the EAC in accordance.
- Rescinding the autonomy agreement dated March 2008 as problematic and recognizing the importance of editorial autonomy from AUSU Council in policy.
- Understanding that the Editor in Chief will work with the Managing Editor to follow up on the following reports and bring them to the EAC when it is constituted.
 - The Voice Form and Format
 - The Voice Content
 - Journalism Experience and Certification for AU students through The Voice Magazine
 - Marketing plan – short term and longer term

- b) *to make recommendations on how AUSU council can support the implementation of the action plan through non-financial resources; and*

The committee will recommend that AUSU Council:

- work with the editor in chief to find the time to move forward on the action plan; and
- recognize the importance of this initiative and make it a priority for council consideration and action i.e. constituting the EAC, assigning liaison councillor, adopting policy 7.03 etc.

- c) *to develop a procedure to review and reassess the action plan on a regular basis, including but not limited to:*

- i. *meetings between representatives of The Voice and AUSU council to discuss the successes and challenges at defined points in the action plan; and*
- ii. *identifying potential ideas where AUSU council can help with the identified challenges.*

The committee will recommend that AUSU Council:

- constitute the EAC with the council liaison position as soon as possible, and
- put forward a current council member now, who will become the liaison person when the committee is constituted, and will work with the editor in chief in the interim on the committee's recommendations.

Additional objectives of the committee will be:

- a) *to review and make recommendations for the various governing documents of The Voice including, mission, mandate and the Voice/Council autonomy agreement;*

Included in the above recommendations.

- b) *to review and make recommendations on the roles and responsibilities of the managing editor and editor in chief of The Voice.*

Included in the above recommendations.

5.0 Next Steps and Action Items

S. Cornett

The committee discussed how to finalize and document for November 9th council meeting package.

Try for a final meeting – Sarah to send invitation.

If the meeting is not possible, will have an email motion to approve minutes – Sarah to facilitate according to AUSU policy.

A covering report to give some context to the various committee documents – Sarah to draft.

All to review and add or edit as they see fit.

Action Items - Various

All must be complete by November 1 with the exception of wrapping up approval of minutes.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The committee discussed the need for a final committee meetings prior to Wednesday November 2, 2016 when committee recommendations will be circulated to Council for November 9th meeting. A meeting will be scheduled if possible.

S. Cornett

Motion to Adjourn 12:00 pm MT

Summary of Action Items

Date	Status	Deadline	Agenda Item: Action Item and Responsible Party
Sep 9	Withdrawn		3.0 Further Mapping of Committee's First Objective: <u>Marketing of The Voice</u> A high level action plans needs to be sketched out. Sep 14 Update: Assigned to Sarah Cornett Oct 26 Update: Action item withdrawn
Sep 9	In Progress	Nov 2	8.0 Next Steps and Action Items: A report ready for council consideration by November 2, 2016. Committee
Sep 14	Complete		3.0 Mission Statement: Review editorial advisory committee terms of reference to see if there are concepts, wording, sections, from either the policy or the agreement that should be included – particularly with respect to editorial autonomy. Committee Members
Sep 14	Complete	Oct 31	3.0 Mission Statement: Review Policy 7.03 to see if the committee had recommendations other than the revised mission statement that should be documented – particularly with respect to editorial autonomy. Committee Members
Oct 18	Complete	Oct 31	Terms of Reference for Potential Editorial Advisory Committee: Sarah agreed to formatting as an AUSU policy and do a final round of editing to get it ready to present to council. S. Cornett

Oct 18/26	In Progress Oct 31	Advocating for AU Journalism Program: Have this committee look for smaller action items, low hanging fruit, that could create ties with existing AU staff and students and courses to benefit The Voice and AU students involved in writing related courses. S. Jacobsen
Oct 18	Complete Oct 31	The Voice Content: It was noted that committee members should have one more look at Carla's report and circulate any suggestions before next meeting. Committee Members
Oct 26	Nov	Approval of Meeting Minutes: Ensure committee October 18 and 26 minutes are approved by email if necessary. S. Cornett
Oct 26	Nov 1	Next Steps and Action Items: Try for a final meeting Committee If the meeting is not possible, will have an email motion to approve minutes. S. Cornett Draft covering report to give some context to the various committee documents S. Cornett Review final report for submission to AUSU Council Committee members



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Athabasca University Students' Union

Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 18, 2016

4:00 pm MDT

DRAFT

Meeting Called By: Sarah Cornett, Executive Director, Editor in Chief, Chair
Type of Meeting: Committee Meeting
Minutes: Sarah Cornett
Committee: Bonita Arbeau, Sarah Cornett, Lyle Harvey, Councillor Scott Jacobsen, Writer Carla Knipe, Managing Editor Karl Low, Lisa Sinclair
Absent: Alex Pappas

Agenda and Minutes

1.0 Adoption of Agenda S. Cornett

Motion: BIRT the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan committee adopt the agenda.

2016-10-11 Joint Council Voice Agenda.docx

S. Jacobsen/ B. Arbeau

Carried 7/0

2.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes S. Cornett

Motion: BIRT the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan committee approve the minutes of the August 23, 2016 and September 14, 2016 meeting.

S. Jacobsen/ L. Sinclair

Carried 7/0

2016-09-14 Joint Council Voice Minutes DRAFT.docx

2016-08-23 Joint Council Voice Minutes DRAFT.docx

Old Business

3.0 Mission Statement All

The Voice Mission Statement Draft rev5.docx

Revision 5 was circulated for discussion. The objective of this item was to finalize this document as the committee's recommendation to AUSU Council and/or The Voice staff to provide a consistent and current mission statement for posting on The Voice website and inclusion in the various governing documents (e.g. Policy 7.03) related to The Voice.

Previous discussions indicated recommendation may be to include this version in AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services – The Voice.

It was noted that the previous decision to remove any references to AU that could suggest ownership or influence of The Voice by the university should be removed.

It was decided that while the term Magazine is general, The Voice may become something broader, so that term should come out of the statement.

4.0 Terms of Reference for Potential Editorial Advisory Committee All

TOR The Voice Editorial Committee DRAFT rev2.docx

It was noted that there had been no updates since the last meeting. The specific objective is to finalize the document as committee's recommendation to AUSU Council to create a standing committee based on these terms of reference.

Such a committee will provide accountability to the AUSU membership and maintain editorial distance from AUSU council while providing the means for management oversight by AUSU council through the liaison position and status as a standing committee of AUSU.

It was noted that as an AUSU committee managed through an AUSU policy, council would review and do the final edits of the terms of reference.

The committee agreed that the content was essentially complete in so far as it contains the committee recommendations.

Sarah agreed to formatting as an AUSU policy and do a final round of editing to get it ready to present to council.

Action Item – S. Cornett

5.0 Advocating for AU Journalism Program All

Journalism Experience and Certification through The Voice Magazine.docx

It was noted that Scott had prepared a report which was circulated to the committee on September 14, 2016 for input. The objective is to finalize the content of the report and to articulate recommendation(s) to AUSU Council and/or The Voice staff.

Possible recommendations that were discussed included:

- Providing the report to the Editorial Advisory Committee when/if it is constituted so that group can look for further ideas and strategies related to improving The Voice.
- Recommend to council that the topic could be considered further as an AUSU position paper.
- Have this committee look for smaller action items, low hanging fruit, that could create ties with existing AU staff and students and courses to benefit The Voice and AU students involved in writing related courses.

Action Item – Committee members

6.0 Marketing of the Voice All

It was noted that the action item on this topic was outstanding.

A general discussion on marketing included the following points:

- There could be a dedicated person on the EAC to look at marketing opportunities and strategies.
- The AUSU Communications Coordinator has some skill sets and could do some work related to marketing The Voice. This would need to be coordinated by the Editor in Chief and paid for from The Voice funds.
- Starting small, some basic marketing could begin right away based on current content and format.
- The current budgeting process for The Voice should include marketing.
- Karl, Sarah, and Donette would lead the small start strategy.
- The EAC could look at larger items including a new look and feel, logo, branding, and an expert consultant should be used to do the work.

It was noted in the discussion that marketing The Voice is entwined with the building of a new website which is linked to plans for changes to form and format so the whole process needs to be iterative.

7.0 The Voice Form/Format

All

The Voice Magazine Format Discussion.docx

It was noted that Bonita had prepared a summary report which was circulated to the committee on September 13, 2016 for input. No suggested input has been received to date. The objective is to finalize and articulate recommendation(s) to AUSU Council and/or The Voice staff.

It was noted that the report contains a good summary of potential next steps.

Bonita led a discussion on some of the key points in her report that did not have clear consensus to date. That discussion is briefly summarized below.

Newspaper, magazine, or something else

- What does it mean to “publish” – on line, feature length stuff monthly, other news as it come in.
- Hybrid – both and neither and more.
- Magazine says what? Very broad description without a clear definition.
- Newspaper says what? Hard news, fact based, more descriptive.
- The name is fine as is since having the word “Magazine” in the name helps distinguish it from the many other publications called The Voice.
- The label is not too important.
- Having content guidelines, which will be a mandate of the EAC, are very useful.
- Campus based publications may have printed copies which speaks more to a newspaper and news stands.
- “Digital Magazine” is a nice broad term that captures all.

Weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly

- Hybrid is a possibility when the format is expanded on a new website.
- For example, there could be web content at one frequency, whether regular or as it comes in, and pdf content published on a different schedule.
- Bi-weekly or weekly pros and cons included:
 - It is a best practice to train the audience when to find you so a regular publication date is preferred.
 - There may be a possibility of losing writers with a bi-weekly schedule, although this is not certain.
 - It is unlikely that the Managing Editor tasks will diminish with bi-weekly schedule, it will just change the timelines.

Bonita will do one more round of edits based on the committee discussion and circulate to the committee.

Action Item – B. Arbeau

8.0 The Voice Content

All

The Voice's Content.docx

It was noted that Carla had prepared a summary report which was circulated to the committee on October 4, 2016 for input. No suggested input has been received to date. The objective is to finalize and articulate recommendation(s) to AUSU council and/or The Voice staff.

It was noted that committee members should have one more look at Carla's report and circulate any suggestions before next meeting.

Action Item – Committee Members

9.0 AUSU Voice Autonomy Agreement dated March 2008

All

It was noted at the previous committee meeting that the suggestion was made that the autonomy agreement of March 2008 is problematic in a number of ways and should be rescinded and the concepts of editorial autonomy be inserted in the Editorial Advisory Committee terms of reference and/or AUSU policy 7.03.

It was confirmed that the committee agreed that editorial autonomy for The Voice (i.e. none interference in content by AUSU Council) is important.

Sarah agreed to circulate a draft revisions to 7.03 that incorporates editorial autonomy.

Action Item – S. Cornett

10.0 AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services – The Voice

All

A previous action item suggested the committee would review the whole policy and may make recommendations to AUSU Council beyond incorporating the recommended new mandate statement. This may include sections related to editorial autonomy (see 9.0) and an editorial advisory committee (see 4.0).

This action item remains outstanding.

New Business**11.0 Next Steps and Action Items**

S. Cornett

It was noted that there were some reports to be revised and sent for further review:

TOR The Voice Editorial Committee DRAFT rev2.docx

some reports to be reviewed a final time:

Journalism Experience and Certification through The Voice Magazine.docx

The Voice Magazine Format Discussion.docx

The Voice's Content.docx

And one document to be created and circulated for committee input

Policy_7.03_The_Voice_Magazine Recommendation.docx

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next committee meetings are currently set for:

S. Cornett

Wednesday October 26, 2016 at 11:00 am MDT

Motion to Adjourn

Summary of Action Items

Date	Status	Deadline	Agenda Item: Action Item and Responsible Party
Sep 9	Outstanding Complete		3.0 Further Mapping of Committee's First Objective: <u>Advocate for AU Journalism Program</u> A high level action plans needs to be sketched out S. Jacobsen Sep 14 Update: Assigned to Scott Jacobsen
Sep 9	Outstanding		3.0 Further Mapping of Committee's First Objective: <u>Marketing of The Voice</u> A high level action plans needs to be sketched out. Sep 14 Update: Assigned to Sarah Cornett S Cornett
Sep 9	In Progress	Nov 2	8.0 Next Steps and Action Items: A report ready for council consideration by November 2, 2016. Committee

Sep 14	Outstanding	3.0 Mission Statement: Review editorial advisory committee terms of reference to see if there are concepts, wording, sections, from either the policy or the agreement that should be included – particularly with respect to editorial autonomy. Committee Members
Sep 14	Outstanding Oct 26	3.0 Mission Statement: Review Policy 7.03 to see if the committee had recommendations other than the revised mission statement that should be documented – particularly with respect to editorial autonomy. Committee Members
Sep 14	Complete Oct 26	3.0 Mission Statement: Consider rescinding the autonomy agreement more fully at the next committee meeting when more committee members are present Committee Members
Oct 18	Outstanding Oct 26	Terms of Reference for Potential Editorial Advisory Committee: Sarah agreed to formatting as an AUSU policy and do a final round of editing to get it ready to present to council. Action Item – S. Cornett
Oct 18	Outstanding Oct 26	Advocating for AU Journalism Program: Have this committee look for smaller action items, low hanging fruit, that could create ties with existing AU staff and students and courses to benefit The Voice and AU students involved in writing related courses. Action Item – Committee members
Oct 18	Complete Oct 26	The Voice Form/Format: Bonita will do one more round of edits based on the committee discussion and circulate to the committee. Action Item – B. Arbeau
Oct 18	Outstanding Oct 26	The Voice Content: It was noted that committee members should have one more look at Carla's report and circulate any suggestions before next meeting. Action Item – Committee Members



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Athabasca University Students' Union

Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

10:00 am MDT

APPROVED

Meeting Called By: Sarah Cornett, Executive Director, Editor in Chief, Chair
Type of Meeting: Committee Meeting
Minutes: Sarah Cornett
Committee: Bonita Arbeau, Sarah Cornett, Lyle Harvey, Councillor Scott Jacobsen, Alex Pappas
Absent: Managing Editor Karl Low, Writer Carla Knipe, Lisa Sinclair

Agenda and Minutes

1.0 Adoption of Agenda S. Cornett

Motion: BIRT the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan committee adopt the agenda.

A. Pappas/S. Jacobsen

Carried 5/0

2016-09-14 Joint Council Voice Agenda.docx

2.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes S. Cornett

Motion: BIRT the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan committee approve the minutes of the September 8, 2016 meeting.

B. Arbeau/A. Pappas

Carried 5/0

2016-09-08 Joint Council Voice Minutes DRAFT.docx

Old Business

3.0 Mission Statement All

It was noted that a good discussion was had at the last meeting and Alex Pappas is working on a next draft for circulation. This should be very close to the final draft that will be recommended by the committee.

How the mission statement will be finalized and approved was discussed. It was noted that the most formalized place that the mission statement is documented is in AUSU Policy 7.03 Member Services – The Voice <https://www.ausu.org/governance/bylaws-policies/> and revising this policy through AUSU Council process might be the best way to formalize the new mission statement.

The discussion then turned to another document that the committee had received as background. It was noted that the AUSU Voice Autonomy Agreement dated March 2008 had some wording in it that was confusing and did not reflect the governance structure of AUSU. The following points were made during the discussion:

- The concept of AUSU Council not controlling the content of The Voice or restricting its editorial freedom is important and should be maintained.
- The Voice needs both editorial freedom and editorial integrity.
- The student magazine should be able to hold the student council to account.
- The student magazine can't be completely outside of the student union because the student union is, in effect, the student body.
- AUSU and AUSU Council are not the same thing.
- Having The Voice under control of AU would be inappropriate. The Voice is a student magazine, not an institutional magazine.

- The Voice must have the freedom to hold the institution of AU accountable and receiving funding directly from AU would call that into question.
- The creation of an editorial committee should provide the editorial autonomy from AUSU Council that The Voice needs and should have.

It was noted that the two documents brought up in the discussion, AUSU Policy 7.03 and the AUSU Voice Autonomy Agreement from 2008, both had content and concepts that should be maintained moving forward.

It was decided that the editorial committee terms of reference should be reviewed to see if there are concepts, wording, sections, from either the policy or the agreement that should be included.

Action Item – Committee Members

It was decided to review Policy 7.03 to see if the committee had recommendations other than the revised mission statement that should be documented.

Action Item – Committee Members

It was decided that rescinding the autonomy agreement should be considered more fully at the next committee meeting when more committee members are present.

Action Item – Committee Members

Alex Pappas left the meeting at approximately 10:25am.

4.0 Terms of Reference for Potential Editorial Committee

It was noted that the committee was close to a final draft but that given the previous discussion everyone should look at the document one more time in conjunction with reviewing policy 7.03 and the autonomy agreement.

5.0 Advocating for AU Journalism Program

It was noted that the committee had discussion of a phased approach to AUSU advocating for an AU journalism program but someone is needed to write up a very brief recommendation to council on this issue to circulate for comment and eventually add to the committee deliverables.

Action Item - Scott Jacobsen

The recommendation should include the rationale for the proposal. This was summarised as creating ties with AU instructors and students that increases awareness of The Voice and increasing pool of writers.

It was suggested some research be done to see if AU had considered a journalism program before, what is available at other schools, and what is the demand for graduates of a journalism program given the current state and future trends of journalism and media today.

6.0 Marketing of the Voice

It was noted that the committee had an initial discussion of this topic at its last meeting and someone was needed to put together a high level action plan and lead an email discussion as a committee deliverable.

Action Item – Sarah Cornett (but this will not be done until next meeting)

7.0 The Voice Form/Format

It was noted that the committee will continue with the email thread and discuss at the next committee meeting.

8.0 The Voice Content

It was noted that the committee will continue with the email thread and discuss at the next committee meeting.

New Business

9.0 Next Steps and Action Items

S. Cornett

The action items identified above will bring several of the committee's deliverable into near final state. At this point the deliverables will include:

- A recommendation to institute an editorial committee and a terms or reference document.
- A recommended new mission statement to replace the various versions currently being used including in AUSU policy 7.03.
- Recommendations for marketing The Voice
- Recommendations for form, format and content for The Voice
- Recommendations surrounding the inclusion of editorial freedom and integrity in documents to replace the 2008 autonomy agreement

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next committee meetings will be set through a doodle poll in the next week.

S. Cornett

Motion to Adjourn.

Summary of Action Items

Date	Status	Deadline	Agenda Item: Action Item and Responsible Party
Aug 23	Complete	Aug 29	5.0 Other: report back to the committee discussion with AU's Jon O'Brian regarding potential for collaboration. C. Knipe Sep 9 Update: Delayed due to summer vacation Sep 14 Update: Complete
Sep 9	Outstanding		3.0 Further Mapping of Committee's First Objective: <u>Advocate for AU Journalism Program</u> A high level action plans needs to be sketched out S. Jacobsen Sep 14 Update: Assigned to Scott Jacobsen
Sep 9	Outstanding		3.0 Further Mapping of Committee's First Objective: <u>Marketing of The Voice</u> A high level action plans needs to be sketched out. S Cornett Sep 14 Update: Assigned to Sarah Cornett
Sep 9	Complete	Sep 14	4.0 Mission Statement: One more round of email discussion A. Pappas/All
Sep 9	Complete	Sep 14	5.0 Terms of Reference for Potential Editorial Committee: A next draft terms of reference document circulated for email discussion. S. Cornett/All
Sep 9	Complete	Sep 14	6.0 The Voice Form/Format: A new discussion thread for the committee to work on and discuss again at the next meeting. B. Arbeau/All
Sep 9	Complete	Sep 9	6.0 The Voice Form/Format: Circulate the relevant parts of the AUSU services survey results to the committee. S. Cornett
Sep 9	Complete	Sep 9	6.0 The Voice Form/Format: Circulate the article he wrote summarizing the results of the last The Voice readership survey to the committee. K. Low
Sep 9	Complete	Sep 14	6.0 The Voice Form/Format: A new discussion thread for the committee to work on and discuss again at the next meeting. C. Knipe
Sep 9	In Progress	Nov 2	8.0 Next Steps and Action Items: A report ready for council consideration by November 2, 2016. Committee

Sep 14		3.0 Mission Statement: Review editorial advisory committee terms of reference to see if there are concepts, wording, sections, from either the policy or the agreement that should be included – particularly with respect to editorial autonomy. Committee Members
Sep 14		3.0 Mission Statement: Review Policy 7.03 to see if the committee had recommendations other than the revised mission statement that should be documented – particularly with respect to editorial autonomy. Committee Members
Sep 14		3.0 Mission Statement Consider rescinding the autonomy agreement more fully at the next committee meeting when more committee members are present Committee Members



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Athabasca University Students' Union

Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 23, 2016

6:00 pm MDT

Approved

Meeting Called By: Sarah Cornett, Executive Director, Editor in Chief, Chair

Type of Meeting: Committee Meeting

Minutes: Sarah Cornett

Participants

Committee: Bonita Arbeau, Sarah Cornett, Lyle Harvey, Councillor Scott Jacobsen, Writer Carla Knipe, Managing Editor Karl Low, Lisa Sinclair

Absent: Alex Pappas

Call to Order:

Agenda and Minutes

1.0 Approval of Agenda S. Cornett

Proposed Motion: BIRT the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan committee approve the agenda.

L. Sinclair/B. Arbeau

Carried 7/0

2016-08-23 Joint Council Voice Agenda.docx

2.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes S. Cornett

Proposed Motion: BIRT the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan committee approve the minutes of the August 17, 2016 meeting.

L. Harvey/C. Knipe

Carried 7/0

2016-08-17 Joint Council Voice Minutes DRAFT.docx

New Business

3.0 Terms of Reference for Potential Editorial Committee All

TOR The Voice Editorial Committee DRAFT.docx

A first draft terms of reference document for an editorial committee was circulated for discussion by email on August 18, 2016 and two committee members submitted suggestions by email prior to this meeting. The discussion continued at the meeting. A brief summary of the input received is as follows:

General Principles:

- Accountability to the people who pay for The Voice i.e. the undergrad students or the members of AUSU.
- AUSU includes all undergrad student members, The Voice, AUSU council, and staff.
- AUSU council is elected to manage member resources so is answerable to the membership for management aspects such as staff, budgets, transparency, etc.
- The managing editor will continue to oversee the publishing of The Voice but shouldn't have to continue to do all the work and make all of the decisions.
- That an editor in chief still has "the buck stops here" job.

Name:

- The Voice Editorial Advisory Committee

Purpose:

- Provide oversight to ensure that the Voice is fulfilling its mission statement
- Set the editorial direction of The Voice

Authority:

- Limit the authority of an editorial committee to providing support for the managing editor and editor in chief in producing content for the Voice

Or

Include approval of annual budget as an oversight role (budget would be created by the editor in chief and managing editor) Final approval must be by council which is ultimately responsible to AUSU membership) but editorial committee approves what is sent to council the way a committee would agree on that committee's budget being sent to council.

- The majority indicated that oversight of resources and accountability to the membership by approving the budget was an important aspect of the committee.
- Should the editor in chief have veto power on committee decisions?

Objectives:

- Focus on editorial policy, including the focus on being a conduit for current students, their AUSU representatives, alumni, etc.
- Editorial policy may encompass a range of areas such as editorials, features and news content, reader response, advertisers, clarifications, corrections, complaints, etc.
- Also principles of balance, independence, representation of the membership, etc.
- Have some key aspects in current AUSU Voice Policy 7.03.
- Should build some words around this and should be within mission/mandate.

Membership:

- Possibility of collaboration with AUGSA – At this point The Voice is wholly funded by AUSU members and is created by AUSU bylaw so that is the current focus.
- Include a specific writer representative.
- Have a minimum uneven number of committee members, so that there's not an issue of deadlock.
- Have the AUSU councillor a non-voting member with a specific mandate of liaising between council and The Voice to improve communication, transmit council news and info to The Voice, etc.
- Initial membership includes editor in chief, managing editor and AUSU councillor and then adding additional members.
- Include section editors, possibly in the future.

Membership Eligibility:

- Restricted to regular Voice contributors.
- Must be an undergraduate student in good standing (AUSU member).

Membership Selection:

- As the buck stops with the editor in chief, committee members to be chosen by the editor in chief in consultation with the managing editor.
- All editorial committee members should be elected so that they can truly be held accountable to the AUSU membership. This could be every two years, along with Council, or annually with staggered terms.

Committee Term:

- If committee members are students, then the term would need be on the shorter side (1-2 years) or only junior students could commit to the full term.

Member Commitment and Reporting:

- Subject to the direction The Voice takes as a result of this review process (e.g. weekly newspaper, monthly magazine, etc.)

Review

- Annual review allows flexibility to adjust terms as needed.

A second draft terms of reference will be circulated to the committee for further discussion.

Action Item – S. Cornett

4.0

Mission Statement

All

A first draft terms of mission statement was circulated for discussion by email on August 22, 2016 and there was an email discussion prior to this meeting. O time constraints, there was not time for a significant discussion at the meeting. A brief summary of the email input received is as follows:

What everyone likes so far:

- good framework
- format
- the statement re "...a community project for the student body defined, in part, by our collaboration..."
- the Canadian with a global perspective - could be a Canadian perspective extended globally.
- the last line about it being AU's Voice (see below – may need to be AU Students' Voice).

To be considered further:

- incorporate outcome of our discussions of what the Voice "is" e.g. digital magazine
- frequency may not be weekly
- be careful with the wording of the "voice" of AU part... just because we will have to be clear that the Voice is not speaking on behalf of Athabasca University as an institution, but rather on behalf of the students of AU.
- Should the Voice be a publication "by students, for students"? That is, it is a main goal of the publication to allow an avenue for AU students (either undergraduate or graduate) to have their work published and to gain experience/build their resumes? If so, this goal could be included in the mission statement.
- Could work in part of previous mandates that emphasize this idea, e.g., "The Voice will maintain an open submissions policy and actively encourage student participation."
- Additional points about advice and interviews with members of the community could be a good addition.
- State some core sections of The Voice as permanent things such as the editorial, other frequent longstanding parts.
- Add some specifics about how The Voice will achieve its mission, but keep it vague enough that the editorial team won't be written into a corner.
- Something about the purpose of providing a sense of community and belonging for AU students..."inspiration..."
- Key words Community, Connection, Collaboration, Insight and Inspiration.

A second draft mission statement will be circulated to the committee for further discussion.

Action Item – A. Pappas

5.0 Other

All

Carla Knipe noted that she had been looking to get touch with the AU communications through Jon O'Brian to discuss potential for collaboration. She will report back to the committee at the next meeting.

Action Item – C. Knipe**6.0 Next Steps and Action Items**

S. Cornett

It was noted that the action items of the August 17 meeting were complete. The next steps and action items are noted in the sections above and will continue to build the two documents currently in draft form.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next committee meetings are currently set for:
Thursday September 8 at 6:00 pm MDT
Wednesday September 14 at 10:00 am MDT

S. Cornett

Motion to Adjourn

Summary of Action Items

Date	Status	Deadline	Agenda Item: Action Item and Responsible Party
Aug 17	Complete	Aug 19	6.0 Next Steps and Action Items: Create a first draft or skeleton terms of reference for an editorial committee and circulate to committee. S. Cornett
Aug 17	Complete	Aug 23	6.0 Next Steps and Action Items: Discuss and add to the terms of reference by email between this and next committee meeting. Committee Members
Aug 17	Complete	Aug 19	6.0 Next Steps and Action Items: Create a first draft mission statement for The Voice and circulate to the committee. A. Pappas
Aug 17	Complete	Aug 23	6.0 Next Steps and Action Items: Discuss and add to the terms of reference by email between this and next committee meeting. Committee Members
Aug 23		Aug 29	3.0 Terms of Reference for Potential Editorial Committee: Circulate a second draft terms of reference to the committee for further discussion S. Cornett/All
Aug 23		Aug 29	4.0 Mission Statement: Circulate a second draft mission statement to the committee for further discussion A. Pappas/All
Aug 23		Aug 29	5.0 Other: report back to the committee discussion with AU's Jon O'Brian regarding potential for collaboration. C. Knipe

Activity Report

Executive Director

Prepared: November 2, 2016



Athabasca University
Students' Union

Overview

The bulk of this past month has been dedicated to:

- council and executive support,
- committee support, particularly the Joint Council/Voice Committee,
- bylaw review,
- office leasing opportunity exploration,

as well as day to day management and administration tasks.

Administration

Office & Staff

I continue to work on looking at options for the AUSU office space moving forward. The current office lease expires in the spring and I am working with a commercial real estate, Jeremy Deeks with CBRE Edmonton, to explore options that will meet the needs of AUSU and reduce administrative expenses.

At this point the most likely options will be slightly removed from the downtown core of Edmonton with a smaller footprint. The overall cost of leasing (including parking) should be somewhere in the range of \$15K to \$20K over last year. Note that the full savings will not be realized this fiscal year because our current lease extends to the end of March and there will be some expenses associated with moving.

My priorities are (in no particular order because it looks like we can have them all):

- safety and accessibility (i.e. traffic, parking, location) for staff,
- a reasonable degree of comfort and aesthetics for staff who will be there daily, but also for local members, councillors, and other occasional visitors, and
- cost savings for the membership and well within budget.

Finances

AUSU fiscal year is October 1 to September 30 and the year-end audit process is underway.

The finance committee reviewed both the August and draft September reports at the committee meeting later this month. The September reports were draft only because with September 30 being our fiscal year-end, there will be adjustments made that would normally simply be accounted in the next month, but which should be in the correct fiscal year.

All councillors receive the monthly financial reports and are encouraged to ask questions any time they like. All councillors have access to the Finance Committee folder in Google Drive for that purpose and so we don't have to post the reports in two places.

There continue to be no significant concerns over AUSU's financial picture. We will end the year in better financial place than we budgeted for due to a conservative budgeting process, a decent year with out investments, and

My goal to make balance sheets, income statements, variance reports, and budget documents more accurate, clearer, and accessible to the membership continues with the help of Kim as VPFA and the finance committee.

Committee Support

All of the AUSU committees continue to function well and report to council monthly.

The separate committee report for the Joint AUSU Council Voice Action Plan Committee, as well as their report to council, will be circulated with the council meeting package for the November 8 meeting for council consideration.

The awards committee will be in for a busy month with the biannual awards deadline of November 1 and staff, particularly Jamie Mulder, has been busy this last couple of weeks to make sure the packages are ready for the committee within the 10-day turnaround required by policy.

The Voice

The Voice continues publication weekly except for the last week in October when Karl was on vacation. Both Karl Low, Managing Editor, and I continue to work with the Joint Council/Voice Committee and look forward to presenting committee recommendations to council.

Governance

Council By-Election

The council by-election, which began with the job posting for a Chief Returning Officer on August 10, continued with the election date on September 30, 2016 and polls closing October 3, 2016 and appeals period ending uneventfully on October 11 was successfully completed. Our two new councillors Robin Bleich and Amanda Lipinski, officially joined council on October 13, 2016.

AUSU By-laws

Rewriting the AUSU by-laws is a big job! The bylaw working group with me, Kim Newsome and Julian Teterenko is making good progress and although the initial timelines we set proved a bit too ambitious, I like the direction we are going and think the results will serve AUSU and its membership well into the future.

Meetings

October 4	Executive Meeting
October 19	Executive Meeting
October 24	Executive Meeting (Absent – Personal Day)

October 4	Special Council Meeting
October 13	Council Meeting

October 5	Staff Meeting
October 12	Staff Meeting
October 19	Staff Meeting
October 26	Staff Meeting

October 12	Meeting bookkeeper and auditor re: Y-E
------------	--

November 8, 2016 Council Meeting

October 18	Joint Council/Voice Committee Meeting
October 26	Joint Council/Voice Committee Meeting
October 20	Executive and R. MacLeod, AU Registrar
October 25	Kim Newsome VPFA re finances
October 27/28	Bylaw working group
October 31	MECC

Activity Report

Communications and Member Services
Coordinator

Prepared by: Donette Kingyens
Prepared: November 1, 2016



General Administration

- **Student Inquiries**
 - Numerous inquiries regarding awards and bursaries.
 - Many inquiries received are related to AU, such as how to appeal a grade, how to book a course extension, how to schedule exams, how to get a student ID, etc.
 - Handled an advocacy case for a student in Tokyo who was not getting any replies or assistance from AU to find an invigilator as they removed the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo as an approved invigilator.
 - Received many inquiries that were about AU specifically, such as
- **Administration**
 - Creating some more templates for answering student emails.
 - Set up email accounts for new council members and provided them with background info, drive access, and group email access.
 - Worked on cleaning up DroBo (ongoing project).
 - Updated committees list.
 - Continued working on Staff Benefits plan due to new information received, put together revised report for Executive.
 - Updated email templates & website for Smart Draw as the subscription will be ending in November and is not being renewed.
 - Had Geeks on the Way come in to do a computer clean up, set up back-ups, etc.
- **Meetings:**
 - Oohlala team to discuss push notifications
 - Student VIP Rep to discuss staff benefits plan options
 - Student Lifeline team to discuss marketing strategies for upcoming year

Projects

- **Manuals / Procedures**
 - Continued working on Staff Manual for the AUSU office staff.
 - Made a few small revisions to councillor manual.
 - Created an orientation manual for Awards Committee
- **#igo2AU Contest**
 - Continued to advertise contest on website, social media, & newsletter
 - Assisted with tracking entries / correcting errors in entry tracking

- Noted a substantial increase in followers on social media as well as a jump in the number of Mobile App accounts and course evaluations completed.
- **Awards**
 - Assisted with applications for November awards deadline.
 - 150 applications were received.
- **Swag Research**
 - Researched & priced out options for calendars, toques, and pencil cases.
 - Researched cost to replace AUSU's banner for convocation as our current one is outdated, and drafted up new template for it
- **Waiver forms**
 - Created various waiver forms for the following (and designed a standard template):
 - **Advocacy** (*to get signed permission from students to contact AU on their behalf and access their student record, which is required by some Departments*)
 - **Awards & Bursaries** (*revised – waivers required before we distribute awards & bursaries*)
 - **Councillor - Investment Conflict of Interest** (*per policy 6.07.15*) – sent to all councillors to complete
 - **Councillor - Membership Requirements** (*per policy 21.4*) – sent to the 3 councillors who have been on council for over a year

Services

- **Statistics on Services Provided for the Month:**
 - Note a huge increase in Mobile App accounts as a result of the #igo2AU contest.

Month	Mobile App Accounts	Smart Draw	Lynda	Calendars	Eyewear Discount	Grad Cards	Welcome Email
Oct 2016	140	4	30	3	12	65	415
Sept 2016	291	9	33	3	7	104	751
Aug 2016	212	21	78	1	42	78	575
July 2016	145	37	159	0	n/a	79	797
June 2016	176	12	43	2	n/a	265	1405
May 2016	99	14	28	1	n/a	346	1005
Apr 2016	94	18	38	1	n/a	0*	809
Mar 2016	136	2	22	3	n/a	69	376
Feb 2016	95	5	18	11	n/a	63	393
Jan 2016	409	12	33	68	n/a	95	607
Dec 2015	185	23	29	1,262	n/a	66	480
Nov 2015	104	5	20	10	n/a	55	368
Oct 2015	192	2	31	12	n/a	n/a	389
Sep 2015	881	5	16	22	n/a		750

Note: No grad cards sent in March as there was an issue with our card order.

- **Lynda.com**

- *Note: In September 2015 I purged all users who had not accessed their account in over a year.*

Month	Total Accounts:	New Accounts	Videos Viewed	Hours viewed	Avg. min. per login	Certificates completed
Oct 2016	843	30	1510	117	21	18
Sept 2016	813	33	2062	131	18	31
Aug 2016	780	78	2568	168	20	46
July 2016	702	159	5952	401	41	141
June 2016	547	43	2226	168	27	34
May 2016	502	28	1725	139	23	17
April 2016	476	38	1493	94	19	19
Mar 2016	437	22	1481	111	35	24
Feb 2016	413	18	2977	204	43	51
Jan 2016	395	33	1544	103	21	22
Dec 2015	362	29	3398	230	28	56
Nov 2015	333	20	4383	303	40	101
Oct 2015	313	31	1386	87	15	13
Sep 2015	282	16	3953	270	57	74

- **Course Evaluations**

- Note a huge increase in course evaluations due to the #igo2AU contest.

Month	Total Evaluations	New Evaluations
Oct 2016	418	65
Sept 2016	353	108
Aug 2016	245	10
July 2016	235	10
June 2016	225	6
May 2016	219	24
April 2016	195	3
Mar 2016	192	7
Feb 2016	185	4
Jan 2016	181	22
Dec 2015	159	4
Nov 2015	155	62
Oct 2015	93	85
Sep 2015	8	8

Social Media & Marketing

- **Newsletters**

- See “**Newsletter Statistics.xls**” in report folder.

- **The Voice**

- Sent Voice ads for each Voice publication in October (Oct 7, 14, 21).
- Note there was no Voice publication on October 28 as the editor was on holidays.
- Received access to the Voice website google analytics and put together statistics on viewership for the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee.

- **Mobile App**

	Total Accounts	New Accounts	Social Connections (total)	Social Connections (month)	Campus Activity (total)	Campus Activity (month)	Events Scheduled
Oct 2016	3,123	140	971	101	13,583	1,571	173
Sept 2016	2,983	291	870	73	12,012	1,281	127
Aug 2016	2,692	212	797	89	10,731	1,343	31
Jul 2016	2,480	148	708	44	9,388	854	15
Jun 2016	2,332	137	665	51	8,534	1,059	60
May 2016	2,195	99	614	40	7,475	697	114
Apr 2016	2,096	94	574	64	6,778	1,257	43
Mar 2016	2,002	136	510	60	5,521	874	43
Feb 2016	1,866	95	450	72	4,647	808	35
Jan 2016	1,771	409	378	61	3,839	626	154
Dec 2016	1,362	185	317	51	3,213	640	139
Nov 2016	1,177	104	266	50	2,573	511	38
Oct 2016	1,073	192	216	59	2,062	690	141
Sep 2016	881	881	157	157	1,372	1,372	317

- Had a meeting with Oohlala to discuss push notifications.

- **Website**

- Updated Elections page after by-election completed
- Added a sidebar image to promote the #igo2AU contest
- Added a new forums page to deal with traffic previously going to a non-existent page, and added info about how to connect with students.
- Posted council meeting agendas
- Posted October newsletters to archives
- Posted numerous policy revisions
- Updated SmartDraw page to indicate it expires on November 30, 2016 and will not be renewed.
- Updated Council page with new councillor info and bios
- Updated Advocacy page with some more recent examples of AUSU advocacy efforts.

- **Website News Articles:**

- [Oct 5 Article](#): AUSU 2016 By-Election Results

- **Website Analytics**

The chart below lists **page views** for our most popular pages. Note, the totals do not reflect how many people actually filled out applications (ie. for awards or course evaluations), just how many people visited the page.

Month	Total Views	Unique Views	Awards	Careers	Course Evals	lynda	Mobile App	Smart Draw	Student Lifeline	The Voice
Oct 2016	17,815	7,483	3,613	244	600	428	236	136	197	33
Sept 2016	16,024	6,752	2,200	293	748	552	561	136	309	66
Aug 2016	10,010	4,296	675	404	506	1,038	178	159	138	50
July 2016	8,786	3,757	798	314	151	1,247	101	188	133	76
June 2016	7,474	3,154	416	147	238	554	230	287	192	74
May 2016	7,746	3,531	669	143	181	513	101	156	135	23
April 2016	17,503	7,339	5,351	199	57	483	88	106	133	16
Mar 2016	12,235	4,388	596	189	61	271	173	103	146	29
Feb 2016	8,796	3,339	305	136	68	484	72	92	76	8
Jan 2016	8,178	3,396	385	75	226	469	204	122	132	26
Dec 2015	7,384	3,255	370	69	85	533	564	114	102	22
Nov 2015	4,855	3,696	302	34	262	188	110	71	50	13
Oct 2015	9,806	7,526	1,887	44	334	324	79	60	78	38

Month	Advocacy	Quick Links	Health Plan	Exec Blog	Financials	Council	Minutes	Agendas	News & Archives	Policies
Oct 2016	35	65	217	589	29	343	67	112	126	287
Sept 2016	82	51	266	46	60	300	44	82	149	289
Aug 2016	35	69	265	209	101	409	53	97	231	356
July 2016	45	24	182	459	53	228	34	41	133	257
June 2016	52	27	250	43	82	201	23	78	136	225
May 2016	36	63	258	151	22	270	23	42	172	224
April 2016	45	44	228	82	n/a	796	85	148	121	223
Mar 2016	35	n/a	208	48	n/a	281	84	128	127	341
Feb 2016	35	n/a	230	42	n/a	272	61	n/a	126	459
Jan 2016	55	n/a	476	68	n/a	325	40	n/a	89	437
Dec 2015	38	n/a	350	118	n/a	215	15	n/a	130	336
Nov 2015	22	n/a	293	20	n/a	181	58	n/a	95	248
Oct 2015	35	n/a	232	72	n/a	254	62	n/a	106	280

- **Other pages of note:**
 - #igo2AU contest article: 1,558 views
 - 2016 by-election candidate biographies: 1,537 views

- **Website Polls**

- *If AUSU had a vlog, would you follow it?*
 - Yes 7
 - No 7
 - Maybe 9
 - What's a vlog? 5
 - **Total Responses:** 28
 - **Posted:** Oct 10 – Oct 24
- *Where would you most like to be stranded?*
 - Shopping Mall 13
 - All You Can Eat Buffet 9
 - Desert Island 10
 - Library 17
 - **Total Responses:** 49
 - **Posted:** Sept 26 – Oct 10

- **Social Media Statistics:**

- Note there is still an increase in activity on social media due to the #igo2AU contest.

- **Facebook**

Month	Total Posts	Total Likes	New Likes	Average post reach	Overall Engagements	Overall Impressions
Oct 2016	53	973	69	434	569	63,968
Sept 2016	60	916	121	523	345	60,235
Aug 2016	54	797	25	437	251	63,419
July 2016	45	777	16	503	77	59,619
June 2016	59	770	26	344	113	37,591
May 2016	52	746	12	183	183	22,411
Apr 2016	64	742	20	198	200	37,385
Mar 2016	66	730	18	174	113	35,246
Feb 2016	59	720	16	141	75	26,474
Jan 2016	37	707	28	154	45	20,180
Dec 2015	38	681	32	109	60	9,262
Nov 2015	49	654	20	83	81	8,508
Oct 2015	68	641	18	82	151	12,881

- **Twitter**

Month	Total Posts:	Total Followers	New Followers	Retweets	Link Clicks	Overall Impressions
Oct 2016	52	720	39	13	76	16,393
Sept 2016	51	688	57	19	67	13,618
Aug 2016	51	640	14	10	64	11,681
July 2016	45	636	16	8	53	10,396

Jun 2016	53	625	17	12	55	14,096
May 2016	55	608	17	18	72	19,533
Apr 2016	55	600	13	40	73	14,193
Mar 2016	59	589	10	36	55	15,335
Feb 2016	65	588	17	29	80	13,011
Jan 2016	36	584	18	14	34	10,403
Dec 2015	34	579	12	12	37	11,075
Nov 2015	53	577	12	11	92	11,704
Oct 2015	68	574	24	40	60	7,650

○ **LinkedIn**

Note: I began actively posting on LinkedIn mid-August.

Month	Total Posts:	Total Followers	New Followers	Engagements	Link Clicks	Overall Impressions
Oct 2016	53	158	56	44	36	3,984
Sept 2016	50	110	89	52	27	3,022
Aug 2016	20	22	0	35	27	1,239